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HERMAN OF UNNA:

A

SERIES OF ADVENTURES

OF THE

FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

IN WHICH THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECRET TRIBUNAL
UNDER THE EMPERORS WINCESLAUS
AND SIGISMOND, ARE DELINEATED,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

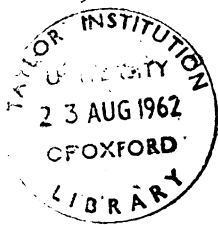
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HERMAN OF UNNA:

A SERIES OF ADVENTURES

OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY, &c.

CHAPTER I.

EVERY thing has an end : a passion of the nature of that of Helen and Sigismund, is beside seldom of long duration, and we are almost tempted to give the princess some credit for its brevity, by attributing it to her little experience on such subjects. How could she think to fix for ever her lover ? How hope, at some future period, to share his throne ? Love, and her confidence in her charms, must have certainly blinded her, and she could never have heard of the former adventures of the faithless Sigismund. She had calculated too much on his constancy ; and so completely had he subjugated her, that, in-

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stead of being a prisoner in the castle of Soclos, he was become in reality its master.

It never entered the mind of Helen, that Sigismond was secretly contriving to deliver himself at once, both from his prison and his mistress, of whom he was now equally weary; and her surprise was extreme, when one day he entered her chamber equipped for a journey. At first she was thunderstruck; but supposing he might be going a hunting, she offered to accompany him. "No, my charming princess," said Sigismond, "I must leave you."

"Leave me? I am answerable with my life for your person!"

"And is mine in no danger, if I remain longer here? Your rebellious sons are informed of the kindness with which you treat me; they will soon arrive, and will load me with chains, somewhat heavier than those in which you have held me captive."

"Alas! I perceive they are too light; you will easily shake them off."

"Dear Helen! is it possible for me in this place, in the arms of love, to take the necessary steps to regain the throne, from which I have been hurled? Think what you require! Think of the happiness,

“ nefs, the reputation of him whom you
“ love !”

Helen fell into a profound rêvery, from which at length she recovered to ask, whether, if fortune favoured him, he would still think of her, and would not forget the love and constancy he had sworn.

Sigismond, who gave himself little trouble about the vows he made to a mistress, readily acquiesced, and his language was in other respects so tender, that she was duped by his artifice, and consented to his escape. She then prayed him at least to stay a few days longer before he left her. The king was all compliance; but as this delay by no means suited him, and he was apprehensive of losing the opportunity that offered of regaining his liberty, he resolved to escape secretly, which served to justify Helen to her sons from having any concern in his flight.

CHAPTER II.

NO one was more pleased than Herman at having escaped from the palace of this Circe. He rejoiced, that he was at length emancipated from a life of idleness, without being obliged to quit his master, whom he considered as restored to virtue, and of consequence again began to love. Sigismond bent his course to the castle of count Cyly, the brother of his sister's husband, where adventures awaited him, that deprived him anew of the heart of the loyal knight of Unna.

The Cyls had always been partisans of Sigismond. One was bound to him by family ties; the other, count Peter Cyly, at whose house he was now a guest, was linked to his fate by a still more powerful charm. This Peter was surnamed the Weak, an appellation he well deserved, and had nothing to recommend him but his wife, the handsome Barbe, formerly maid of honour to queen Mary of Hungary, and for whom he was indebted to Sigismond. Barbe was the guarantee of her husband's fidelity, as, but for her, he might easily have been gained by any one that knew his imbecility. She was entirely devoted to the king,
professedly

professedly from gratitude for having bestowed her on Peter the Weak ; her spouse, at least, was fully convinced of this ; but there were people who thought differently, and the sequel will probably inform us, which party was in the right. Thus much is certain, that Barbe had maintained the best disposition of loyalty towards Sigismond in her husband, who had always need of being moved by some external impulse, to enable him to take part in any thing ; and that she was the principal motive, that had induced the king to prefer the castle of count Peter for his asylum. Sigismond and his two companions, Herman and Hertingshausen, were received with open arms ; and though the count expressed simply enough his astonishment at this sudden visit, it appeared, nevertheless, that Barbe had long expected her illustrious guest.

Herman was not so blind on the subject as count Cyly. He observed looks of intelligence between his master and the countess ; he perceived also, that Hertingshausen was at the bottom of the secret, and treated by Barbe as an old acquaintance. Hence it was easy for him to infer, that the frequent absence of Hertingshausen, during the latter part of their abode at the castle of Soclos, when Sigismond and his people were no longer treated as prisoners,

was

was for the purpose of carrying on a secret correspondence between the king and the countess; and that his master had been prompted to quit Helen, less from disgust of the idle and voluptuous life he led with her, than a desire to visit his ancient friend.

A few days were sufficient to convince Herman, that the scenes of dissipation which had taken place in the castle of Socols would here be renewed; and that his hopes of re-entering on an active life, and of pursuing his fortune, were built on a sandy foundation.

This conviction led him to resume his former purpose of leaving his master, as there was nothing to induce him to stay at the castle of Cyly. It is true, that it was sometimes proposed in the cabinet council of Sigismund, to take effective measures for replacing the monarch immediately on the throne; but these measures were deferred from day to day, and the means chosen for the accomplishment of this great design consisted less in the employment of force of arms, than of artifice and intrigue; things in which Herman was totally unskilled, and of which he was even so impolitic as to own his disapprobation.

What rendered his abode at the castle of Cyly still more disagreeable was the want of a friend, whom he could love, and in whom

whom he might confide. Before they left Soclos, the conduct of Hertingshausen had more than once excited his contempt, and here it soon rendered him totally unworthy the affection of a man like Herman. Hertingshausen did not content himself with being the go-between of an illicit amour, he sought also to participitate in the pleasures of his master. He had eyes only for the handsome countess, and the countess put no restraint on her's, unless when in danger of being observed by Sigismond. With respect to our knight, whom she had considered from the beginning as a personage of no consequence, she feared not his notice, and was as little reserved before him as before her blind and imbecil husband. Indeed so excessive was the impudence of the countess, that the innocence and purity of Herman's mind would scarcely permit him to credit the testimony of his senses. Meanwhile he knew not yet how far this new Messalina could carry her effrontery and licentiousness, of which history has transmitted to us some account; nor was he fully convinced, till at length she cast her lascivious eyes upon him with intent to draw him also into her snares.

I shall here drop the curtain, to conceal from my reader the horrible scenes that passed in the castle of Cyly; and content myself with saying, that they were such.

as, in the eyes of Herman, to give it the appearance of an infernal abode, which he thought continually of quitting it ; and that the only circumstance, by which he was detained, was his being doubtful whether he ought to be silent, before he departed, or inform his master of the abominable practices of the countess. The former his probity forbade ; and his delicacy revolted at the latter.

In the explanation that he must have entered into with Sigismund, he must have owned his knowledge of the monarch's connexions with the wife of count Peter ; and that, perhaps, without daring to have expressed all the horror with which it inspired him ; a conduct which appeared to him a sort of tacit approbation, to which he could by no means bring himself to consent : and thus he remained undecided, till new discoveries filled up the measure of his indignation, and precipitated his departure.

The contempt with which Herman repaid the advances of the countess had drawn on him her hatred, nor was she contented till she had infused similar sentiments into the mind of Sigismund. Hertingshausen had already, at Soclos, deprived Herman of the first place in his master's affections : and at Cyly our knight ceased to be summoned to the deliberations held

held on the subject of reinstating Sigismund on the throne. He discovered too, that the regaining of the crown of Hungary was not the sole object in agitation; for the ambitious Barbe had inspired the king with more elevated pretensions. It had formerly been predicted to her, that she should be an empress; already she considered herself as the wife of Sigismund; and it is therefore not to be wondered at, that she sought to instil into him the desire of ascending the imperial throne, the object of her dearest wishes, and to which she had no hope of arriving, unless he was seated upon it himself.

All these things gave infinite displeasure to Herman. He heard of plots forming against the life not only of Wincesslaus, whose crown already tottered on his head, but also of duke Frederic of Brunswick, and other nobles, who had pretensions to the imperial sceptre: and he dreaded, lest he should not arrive in time to caution and to save them. In this emergency, Herman had the generosity to forget, that duke Frederic was his rival, designed by the count of Wirtemberg to become the consort of Ida: he considered him only as a prince threatened with cowardly assassination, for whose safety, as well as that of Wincesslaus, he would readily, on such an occasion, have sacrificed his existence.

Herman was now unalterably determined to quit, without delay, this den of murderers. But it was not so easy as he thought to escape from the castle of Cyly. A lofty wall surrounded the park through which it was necessary to pass. To this wall there was but one gate, which was shut by night, and strictly guarded by day. Thus he discovered, that Sigismond and his people were no less prisoners here than in the castle of Soclos. At first Herman had fixed on the night for the execution of his design : but he was obliged to change his purpose, and wait for day ; flattering himself, that he could effect his escape more easily by means of a present to the guard, than by endeavouring, with his single strength, to burst enormous gates fortified with bars of iron. With this view he went to repose himself in one of those delightful alcoves or shrubberies, with which the park abounded, and there was witness to a conversation, that we think of sufficient importance to be communicated to the reader in a chapter by itself.

CHAPTER III.

HERMAN presently perceived that he was not alone in the alcove. His safety required, that he should not be discovered, and thus necessity obliged him for once to play the eaves-dropper, in spite of the contempt he had always entertained for so despicable a practice. The reader will learn who were the persons that had preceded our hero, from the following conversation, to which his arrival gave birth.

“Hark! I hear a noise.”

“It is nobody, countess, it is only the rustling of the leaves.”

“I would not for the world any one should overhear us.”

“It is impossible; your two husbands, as you have seen, are dead drunk.”

“My *two* husbands, indeed! A pretty conceit! You are jealous, Hertingshausen?”

“It is for husbands to be jealous of the lover, not the happy lover of the husband.”

“And jealous they will be. Ah, Kunz-
man! Another time let me beseech you
to be more prudent; to-night you quite
forget yourself. Be contented with giv-
ing

“ing me proofs of your affection when
“we are alone : but in presence of the
“king, before count Peter . . . Surely
“the wine must have deranged your in-
“tellects.”

“You are alarmed without cause. Si-
“gismund and the count were both scarce-
“ly capable either of seeing or hearing.”

“But know you not, that, in their cups,
“fools become wise and cowards brave.”

“Brave indeed ! I would not have ad-
“vised him, when sober, to strike me for
“stealing a kiss from your lips.”

“Fie, Kunzman ! You would have
“borne it, and I cannot help thinking of
“the disgrace you have sustained. Leave
“me. I will never suffer by my side a man
“whom Peter the Weak has beaten.”

“Countess !”

“You are yet but a simple page. Leave
“me, I say ! Herman for me ! He would
“not have taken a blow from count Peter,
“nor even from king Sigismund himself.

“Herman, countess ! Do not render me
“desperate ! You know what I have al-
“ready said on this cursed subject. Is it
“not true, that, had he been as willing
“as yourself, you would have made him
“happy ?”

“The brave are always happy.”

“Heavens ! I shall go distracted ! . . .

“Herman, Herman ! where art thou ?

“Where

“ Where shall I find thee? Thy doom is fixed.”

“ This might be well in a man who had no fears. However, to-morrow count Peter is to hunt with the brave Herman. If you have any inclination, you may avenge yourself of both at once. Go : let us see with what deeds of heroism, love and vengeance will inspire you. But, to speak frankly, you will return, I have no doubt, with your hands and garments as spotless as they are at this moment. How indeed should it be possible to defile with blood those pretty white fingers, or that spruce silk doublet !”

The discourse of this fury was more than once interrupted by the blasphemies of the enraged Hertingshausen ; and when it was finished, he rushed like lightning from the alcove, while Barbe burst into an infernal laugh, loud enough to reach his ears notwithstanding his speed.

Herman was so astonished at what he had heard, that he knew not how he ought to act. The conclusion of the countess's speech would have induced him to make his escape, had not a sentiment of honour withheld him. He had never been accustomed to fly before his enemies ; and, beside, he trembled for the life of the count, with whom he was in reality engaged to hunt

hunt the next day. From the extreme imbecility of his understanding Herman was induced to consider him in the light of a woman, and consequently deemed himself bound as a loyal knight to protect him from outrage.

He was detained a few minutes longer in the alcove by the arrival of Barbe's waiting-maid.

"Retire, lovers!" said she: "day begins to dawn."

"Your caution is useless," answered Barbe: "I am alone."

"Alone!"

"I have at length roused Hertingshausen out of his lethargy. Neither Herman nor Peter will survive the approaching day: I have set a famished tiger at their heels. I know Kunzman; he will certainly put them to death let him find them where he will."

"But why? good God! why?"

"Fool, that thou art! Every day am I not exposed to the contemptuous looks of the one, and thou knowest how the other behaved last night. I wanted only to see my lover struck by my stupid husband: it will next be my turn."

"And shall I be able after this, my lady, to say that you are not cruel?"

"Cruel!—For the tenth time let me remind thee of queen Mary. Does she
" not

“ not still live peaceably in her convent ?
“ Have I not disdained to spill her blood,
“ though it would secure my fortune ?”

The sequel will perhaps inform us, whether Herman comprehended these words, or reflected seriously on their meaning. But the haste with which he quitted the alcove, as they were uttered, leaves room to doubt his having heard them.

“ What is that ?” exclaimed the maid, whom Herman had jostled, as he passed between her and the branches of the alcove.

“ Good God !” cried Barbe: “ If any
“ one has overheard us !

“ Just as you were speaking of the
“ queen, something passed me so quickly
“ Ah, madam ! I tremble I fear
“ Is it indeed true, that your hands
“ are not stained with the queen’s blood ?”

“ I swear they are not Why should
“ I assassinate a rival, who injures me so
“ little with Sigismond ? I never shed blood
“ out of wantonness.

“ It is very cold, madam ; besides, it is
“ almost day ; will you please to go in ?”

Barbe was silent ; and they quitted the alcove.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER IV.

IN vain did Herman traverse the forest in quest of his adversary. Not being able to find him he hastened back to the castle, to inform count Peter of his danger. He too had disappeared; Hertingshausen, it was said, had come for him from king Sigismond half an hour before, and Herman had also been inquired after.

Herman could guess, at least pretty nearly, the road Kunzman was likely to take with the unfortunate count. It was not difficult for so artful a traitor to carry the feeble minded Peter wherever he could with most security execute his detestable purpose. The defender of the unhappy victim quickened his steps, but scarcely had he quitted the castle when he beheld himself surrounded by the guards, who demanded his sword in the name of king Sigismond, and told him that they must conduct him instantly to prison.

Herman obeyed, or rather was forced to obey. Resistance would have been useless; its only consequence would have been the shedding of innocent blood, without perhaps effecting his escape. He was shut up in a tower in the north wing of the castle; on his asking his conductors what was his crime, they shrugged up their shoulders

shoulders but gave him no answer; they promised, however, at his urgent intreaties, to send to the forest in search of count Peter, who he assured them was in danger of his life.

Towards noon the prisoner was conducted before his judge. King Sigismond cast on him, for the first time in his life, a look of indignation. Herman stood before him with that air of confidence which innocence alone can give.

“Vile, dissembling hypocrite!” exclaimed the king: “was it for thee to take upon thyself the character of a preacher of virtue, to censure, with so envious an eye, innocent pleasures, whilst at the same time thou wert secretly attempting to ravish thy master’s property?”

“Let your majesty deign to pardon him, in consideration of his youth:” interposed Barbe, whom Herman had not before noticed: “Perhaps he had drank too freely, and was not in his senses: besides, what is a kiss?”

“A kiss!” cried Sigismond: “To you indeed, a kiss seems a trifle! Traitors, you love Herman, or you would not speak thus.”

“Have I then been mistaken for Hertingshausen,” asked Herman, casting a look of contempt on the countess.

“My eyes, it is true, told me that it was Hertingshausen,” said the king: “They represented

“ represented to me, not thy figure but
“ his. But I will not believe their testi-
“ mony; I was half asleep, and the coun-
“ tress is in the right: it was not he, it was
“ thou, who hadst the boldness to attack
“ what is most dear to me in the world?”

“ My lord! my king!” resumed Barbe,
with a suppliant voice, “ You are certainly
“ deceived: yes, yes, it was Hertingshau-
“ sen, and not this poor Herman: pardon
“ him, pray pardon him, if you would
“ not have me die too!”

“ Withdraw:” said Sigismund: “ The
“ kiss shall not cost thee thy life; it is but
“ a trifle, as the countess says. But that
“ she loves thee! that the most beautiful of
“ her sex adores thee, and would die with
“ thee! Distraction! . . . Retire;
“ retire from my sight.”

Herman was led back to his prison. He
saw what was the design of his accuser.
Her equivocal answers, the inclination she
pretended for him, were meant to inflame
the jealousy of Sigismund. She was well
aware, that a look, a tear, would protect
her from the rage of her lover: but she
wished Herman to become its victim.

“ This was a master-stroke,” said Barbe
to her waiting woman, when she was alone
with her. “ Sigismund saw but too clearly
“ in his cups. He would infallibly have
“ put Hertingshausen to death. How
“ lucky

“ lucky that I was able to make him believe Herman to be the guilty person !”

“ Alas ! I was so pleased,” said the servant, when I found him here in the court of the castle ! so happy that he had escaped the sword of Kunzman ! and now a new danger has befallen him. Ah ! why did I not conceal from you . . . ”

“ Weak creature ! Surely thou dost not weep ?”

“ And yet you loved him once ?”

“ Put thyself in my place, and thou wilt then conceive, of what slighted love is capable.”

“ I could not hate so noble a youth, however he might despise me.”

“ Hold thy peace, and see if Hertingshausen be not yet coming. He will at least have executed one of my commissions.”

The maid looked, weeping, out of the window, as did Herman, at the same moment from the grille of his prison, towards the road that led to the forest.

Night was approaching. A troop of horsemen, issuing from the wood, advanced full speed towards the castle. Despair was visible in their eyes, and the words they uttered, as they alighted at the gate, seemed rather confused murmurs, than articulate words. Two of them passed under his

his grated window, and he heard the following conversation :

"How terribly the boar has gored him in his side," said one : "I never before beheld such a wound."

"It was no boar," said the other, "take my word for it ; but the sabre of some assassin. Sir Herman was right, when he sent us to his succour : surely he has the gift of prophecy."

"And there was no life in him ? He was actually dead ?"

"Alas ! yes He was a good master ; he never did injury to any one. How I pitied the brave Kunzman. He must certainly have fought valiantly in defence of the count, for he was wounded and covered with blood. And then how affecting was his grief ! He wept over the dead body, and tore his hair with sorrow. I could never have believed he had such love for him."

At these words, Herman shut the window, and fell almost senseless on the floor of his prison. "Behold then," cried he, "how guilt triumphs, and innocence is oppressed ! Eternal judge ! where is thy vengeance ?"

Presently the rumbling noise of a carriage, and the cries he heard, among which he thought he could distinguish the plaintive voice of the countess, informed him that

that the corpse of the unfortunate count Cyly was arrived. A cold sweat pervaded his body; he moved trembling towards the window, but retired before he had reached it, unable to bear the melancholy spectacle.

It is difficult to divine, what were the thoughts and feelings of Herman, during the mournful silence that succeeded this fearful tumult. A noise at the door of his prison, at length roused him from his gloomy reverie. The bolts gave way. A female voice said to him: "Sir Herman
" you are at liberty?"

"At liberty! By whose order?"

"By the assistance of a poor girl, who
" has taken pity on you, and who wishes,
" by a good action, to make some atone-
" ment for the many sins she has com-
" mitted. Fly! fly! before it be too
" late!"

"Fly! Innocence never flies!"

"What will your innocence avail you
" here?"

"I will first avenge the blood of count
" Peter, by publishing the name of his
" cruel assassin?"

"But who will listen to you?"

"Sigismond shall listen to me. I will
" unmask to him the hypocrite Barbe."

"My mistress! Oh, I beseech you, do
" not seek your ruin!"

"Barbe,

“ Barbe, thy mistress? Art thou then
“ one of her accomplices?”

“ I am I am But for hea-
“ ven’s sake fly. The countess now rules
“ alone in this castle. The king quitted
“ it in haste an hour ago. A courier
“ brought him news from Prague. Some
“ extraordinary revolution is talked of.
“ But what am I doing! Away: lose not
“ those precious moments which can never
“ be recalled. I must instantly shut the
“ tower, where it has been resolved to let
“ you perish with hunger. Your escape
“ will not be immediately discovered, but
“ my absence will be remarked, and you
“ will have to reproach yourself with the
“ death of her who has fought your de-
“ liverance.”

Herman no longer objected to follow her advice. He took the hand of his conductor, and expressed a wish to know the name of the person who had acquired so deep a claim on his gratitude. She complied with his request, and before they parted, informed him beside, that Kunzman, notwithstanding his wound, and the countess’s intreaties, had been obliged to accompany the king, who, probably from a remainder of suspicion, no longer treated him with his wonted partiality.

CHAPTER V.

HERMAN fled, and fled with caution, because he knew that the vengeance of a cruel woman, whose pride he had offended, pursued him. During his journey, which was long, he heard of various events. The emperor Winceslaus was all but deposed : his wife, the incomparable Sophia, courageously shared his troubles. She seemed to have begun to love him just as he became unfortunate. She consoled him ; she considered his not having filled the place of Susanna with a new mistress as a merit in him ; she was even generous enough to lament the melancholy fate of a woman who had occasioned her so much sorrow. This worthless creature, desirous of forming her taste upon the model of her lover, and of assuming the direction of his orgies, had found it necessary to drink as freely as himself ; but her constitution being too feeble to support it, she died in consequence of her intemperance, without being in the least regretted by him, to whom she had sacrificed her health and life. " Women," said the emperor, speaking of her after her death, " are absolutely
" good

“good for nothing, not even for drinking.”

While Winceslaus, shut up in a castle, owed his safety solely to the prudence of Sophia, whose tender care he repaid after his manner, the affairs of Sigismond in Hungary had taken a favourable turn; his enemies were humbled, and, by the assistance of count Cyly, brother to Peter the Weak, he had re-ascended the throne. He married the widow of the deceased count, and found in this union the deserved chastisement of his perfidy respecting queen Mary, the princess Helen, and a thousand others. Barbe ruled him despotically. The only point she could not obtain from Sigismond was to keep Hertingshausen in his service. The remembrance of the kiss, which he could not help charging on him rather than on Herman, never escaped from his mind. Kunzman was obliged therefore to quit the court, and to enter, under no very favourable circumstances, into the service of the elector of Mentz, where perhaps we shall shortly pursue him.

The projects of Sigismond to obtain the imperial crown did not prove successful. A great number of princes aspired to it, among others Robert count palatine, count Everard of Wirtemberg, and Frederic duke of Brunswick; and upon one of these

three it was considered as certain that the election would fall.

Herman no sooner heard that count Everard and duke Frederic were among the competitors at Nuremberg, than his doubts respecting the place to which he should direct his steps were at an end. He had hitherto been ignorant of Ida's abode; but he now thought it certain that she must be with her father and her intended sponse. He ardently wished to see her; he was desirous also of acquainting duke Frederic with the conspiracies formed against his life. But the father, the betrothed lover, of Ida, were sounds grating to the ears of Herman. Poor young man! what a prospect for his heart, whether he considered her as the daughter or the wife of the future emperor!

Herman was now in the neighbourhood of Fritzlar, where a rumour prevailed that the princes of Germany had rejected the duke of Brunswick, and that, burning with resentment, the duke had quitted Nuremberg, to return to his own country, accompanied by his brother-in-law, Rodolph of Saxony. It is easy to imagine the pleasure our hero derived from the report. This dangerous rival must then have quitted his mistress, and had no prospect of obtaining the title of emperor, so much desired by count Everard for his son-in-law, should

he be unable to acquire it for himself. New hopes sprung up in the mind of our knight. He beheld every obstacle surmounted, the moment this redoubtable duke had departed from the field; forgetting how few were his pretensions to aspire to the daughter, as it might prove, of an emperor.

Meanwhile, having heard that duke Frederic was to pass by way of Fitzlar, he resolved to introduce himself to this prince, in order to inform him of the danger to which he was exposed. The moment he ceased to consider him as the destined husband of Ida, he felt himself doubly interested in his behalf. He placed himself therefore, under a tree by the side of the highway. The place was solitary. The people of the canton accustomed to see princes pass, waited not in crowds their coming, to assure themselves they were but men.

Herman waited a considerable time. Fatigued with his journey, he at length fell asleep. In this situation he had continued perhaps some hours when he was waked by a fearful dream. He conceived that duke Frederic was torn to pieces by a lion, and that an attempt was made to clothe him in the skin of the prince's murderer.—Recovering from the terror into which he was thrown by this dream, he
rose,

role, and perceived near him a pale and ghastly figure, with hair dishevelled, and a naked sabre in his hand.

Herman started back. "What wouldst thou do with my sabre?" Cried he, perceiving it in the hands of the stranger.

"Thy sabre!" said the man, instantly throwing it into the thickest part of the wood. "Look on the ground; there lies thy sabre. Its terrible appearance struck me so forcible, that I was unable to pursue my way; and suspecting thee for an assassin, I drew my own, in order to defend myself, if thou shouldst awake."

Herman looked, and saw near the place where he had been sleeping, a sabre reeking with blood. "Wretch!" says he, taking the stranger by the throat, "what means that bloody weapon? But, heavens! ... whom do I see? Kunzman of Hertingshausen, the murderer of count Peter!"

Struck with horror, Herman let go his hold, and Kunzman no sooner found himself disengaged than he fled with all speed, leaving our knight in the most inconceivable astonishment.

At the same instant a dreadful clamour was heard in the wood. One lamented the loss of his good master. Another exclaimed, "It is here the murder must have been committed!" while a third cried, "No, it was not here that he fell: we
C 2 " found

“ found his body at a distance. The assassin however cannot be far; we had once almost taken him, but he escaped, and bears in his hand the instrument of his crime*.”

Herman was yet standing, with his arms folded, before the sabre of Kunzman, when these frightful sounds assailed his ears, and he now stepped forward to ascertain whether they were real, or a continuance only of the illusions of his dream; but scarcely had he advanced a single step, when twenty voices cried out at once, “ There he is! behold, behold the assassin!” and twenty sabres glittered in his eyes, ready to be drenched in his blood.

Some evil genius seemed to have arranged matters for the very purpose of throwing suspicion on the innocent and favouring the guilty: for who would suppose they beheld a murderer in a person, who, instead of flying, approached with an air of tranquillity, which a villain, after the commission of a crime, is incapable of assuming; in a young man whose every feature

* History says, “ that duke Frederic entered the wood alone, leaving his attendants at the distance of a bow-shot. Kurd, the chief of his guards, impatient at his delay, followed him and found him assassinated. He was time enough to see the murderers escape, and even came up with one of them, whose name was Hertingshausen.”

more spoke innocence and candour? The only resemblance between him and Kunzman, the author of the murder, consisted in their armour, and the rose coloured sleeve worn by each, both of them belonging to the same order of knighthood.

Herman had been little accustomed to yield to an enemy without defending himself. He accordingly snatched up the sabre of Kunzman, having no resource but to use the bloody and murderous weapon of that assassin, his own sabre having been taken from him while he had slept, and thrown by Kunzman into the wood.

In those days it was by no means uncommon for a man so far to carry his bravery as to prefer dying in combat, to begging favour of an enemy; as the custom of surrendering voluntarily, in consequence of having discovered a superiority of number, or of strength, was yet not established. Herman laid about him like a true and valorous knight. Two of his opponents were already dead at his feet, and others so severely wounded as to be incapable of resistance; when at length the whole troop rushed on him in a body, threw him to the ground, and would infallibly have deprived him of life, had not their chief interfered, and forbidden them to kill him.

"Stop!" cried Kurd, commander of the guards of the unfortunate duke: "The

"villain

"villain deserves not to die by the hands
of brave men like you."

"Ah!" said one of them, who had run
his sword through the body of Herman
after he had been beaten to the ground:
"Your interference is too late. I have
given him his dose. See how his life
escapes with his blood! Sweet sacrifice
of vengeance to the departed manes of
Frederic!"

"What hast thou done?" replied Kurd:
"Haste instantly to bind up his wounds.
He is not the only criminal; the rest
have fled; and he must not die till he
has discovered his infamous accom-
plices."

Herman was lying senseless on the
ground. His wound being bound up, he
was conveyed to an inn in a neighbouring
village, whither Rodolph of Saxony, in-
consolable for the loss of his friend, had
promised to repair.

"Rodolph shall be thy judge," cried
Kurd, perceiving as they went that Her-
man began to recover a little from his
swoon: "Thy soul shalt not take its
flight to hell, till we have learned from
thy mouth the names of thy companions
in iniquity, that we may have ample
vengeance."

Herman made no answer. Probably he
heard not the cruel words that were ad-
dressed

pressed to him. His head fell on one shoulder while his features were expressive of the acutest anguish; and presently, as they placed him on the straw at the inn, his senses a second time forsook him.

Meanwhile enquiries were made respecting duke Rodolph. No person in the village having heard of him, Kurd dispatched half his comrades in search of him, remaining himself with the rest to take care of the wounded prisoner, and endeavour to preserve the feeble spark of life that seemed every moment about to be extinguished.

Towards evening, however, the senses of Herman returned, and he asked for drink. Wine was given him, and he was presently thought sufficiently strong to answer any questions that might be put to him.

"It is possible," said Kurd, to his fellow guards, "that he may die before the duke of Saxony arrives, who has perhaps taken another road. I will interrogate him, therefore, myself, and you shall be witnesses of his deposition."

"An assassin! the murderer of duke Frederic! I!" replied Herman, but with a feeble voice, to the first question that was put to him. "O God, the protector of innocence!"

"Wilt

“ Wilt thou add falsehood to thy crime?
“ Does not this sabre testify against
“ thee?”

“ It was smeared with gore,” cried all the witnesses at once, “ when we saw thee
“ take it from the ground to employ it
“ against us : the blood of our good master, which it has shed, has been mingled
“ with ours.”

“ Let us be just,” said Kurd ; “ This
“ circumstance alone is not sufficient to
“ convict him : the sword of an innocent
“ person may be made bloody by accident. There are things which plead
“ more strongly against him. I will even
“ suppose that I might be mistaken as to
“ his figure and his dress, though I observed them too well when I first came
“ up with him, and tore off the cloak in
“ which he had wrapped himself. But
“ look at the sabre ; it is that of duke Frederick ; and the murderers seized his own
“ sword to bathe it in his blood.”

The witnesses drew near : having examined it, they kissed the homicide steel, exclaiming, “ It is indeed the sabre of
“ our good duke, as sure as there is a God
“ who reigns in Heaven ! Let us take
“ vengeance, instant vengeance on his
“ murderer !”

As the light of a lamp, whose wick, almost consumed when replenished with oil suddenly

suddenly revives, throws out for an instant a more brilliant splendor, and then is entirely extinguished: such was the effect produced on Herman by the wine he had swallowed. This drink, in his present situation, was actual poison; but for the moment it revived him, and gave him a degree of strength and vivacity almost equal to a person in health. Perhaps, too, his desperate situation, of which he now first became sensible, made so lively an impression on him, that he exerted all his powers, resolving not to be accused of murder without having justified himself.

Herman raised himself, therefore, on his feet, and the inn-keeper, with some of his people came to support him.

"No," said he, with firmness, "I am not the assassin of duke Frederic. The sabre in question had never been in my hands till you saw me take it up to defend myself. Long . . . And you must surely have perceived me . . . Long had I contemplated it with horror, without daring to touch it; for I had a presentiment that it was stained with innocent blood . . ."

"Wretch!" said Kurd, "and hast thou then the effrontery to aver this? hast thou the effrontery . . ."

It is unnecessary to relate to the reader word for word the conversation that passed.

Suffice it to say that the accents of truth issuing from the mouth of the almost expiring youth, produced at least the effect of exciting doubts, in the minds of the guards, of what they had hitherto considered as certain. He related at length all that had happened to him in the course of the day; and both the judges and the spectators found so much probability in what he said; that they looked at one another with astonishment, and were at a loss how to act.

Kurd now recollected a circumstance, which, in the first impulse of his rage, he had forgotten; a circumstance that could not fail either to justify or convict the accused. We have observed that he had once nearly apprehended the assassin: he had torn off his cloak, which he seized with one hand, while with the other he grasped so strongly the hair of the murderer that he could not escape without leaving a handful of it with his adversary. This hair Kurd had taken care to preserve, and he drew it from his pocket, in order at once to confound his prisoner, to whom he no longer knew what to say. But how great was his surprize when, looking at this hair, which was black, he compared it with the light ringlets that shadowed the pale face of Herman!—"And am I indeed," cried he, "mistaken?"

“taken? is it possible this man can be
“innocent?”

The inn-keeper, who had hitherto supported Herman on his feet; now let him sink gently on the straw, and thus interposed: “I would lay my life,” said he, “that the person you have apprehended
“is not the criminal. It appears to me
“ Come here, my lads, and look . . .
“it appears to me that he is the young
“knight who has lodged with us for three
“or four days past.”

The servants of the inn-keeper approached. “It is!” cried they at once; “It is the good fir Herman of Unna. Indeed, fir, he is not, he cannot be an
“assassin.”

Herman had in reality staid several days in this village, where he had given a thousand proofs of the goodness of his heart. In every place in which he sojourned he had made himself friends. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that, in consequence of the dispute which now arose between the guards and the people of the inn, and of the report, spread through the village, that the young knight had been wounded by the attendants of duke Frederic; it is not, I say, to be wondered at, that the inhabitants flocked together to see him and avenge his cause. On this occasion the women acted the most
conspi-

conspicuous part. They abused and maltreated the guards, and actually took possession of the unfortunate Herman, who had suffered extremely from the exertions he had made to justify himself, and from the little care that had been taken of him during the uproar excited on his account.

Kurd being at length softened, endeavoured to re-establish peace. "All you have urged," said he, "is still insufficient to prove the innocence of this young man. If he be indeed not guilty, I ardently wish to make reparation for what he has suffered. But, as you yourselves know, he may be fir Herman of Unna, your benefactor, and yet the murderer of the duke. This handful of hair proves more than all your vociferation; but even this is not enough to save him. There were more persons than one, and though not the assassin, he may be an accomplice. The affair must be carried before a tribunal more capable of judging; and if his innocence be there acknowledged, we shall be satisfied. For the present I leave him to your care. Two of my men shall stay to guard him; and if you permit him to escape you must take the consequence. So imprudent a step, while it would be of no service to him,

“him, would be certain ruin to yourselves.”

A horseman now arrived, bringing information that Rodolph was made prisoner, and that his people were assembled within three miles of Fitzlar to fly to his assistance. The brave Kurd quitted the inn without losing a moment. As faithfully attached to Rodolph as to the unfortunate Frederic, he would on no account have been absent from so important an expedition.

CHAPTER VI.

HERMAN remained in the care of his former host. Though his wounds were not mortal, the great quantity of blood he had lost, the efforts he had made, and the wine he had drank, rendered them dangerous. He was for several days between life and death, and would infallibly have perished but for the humanity of the honest peasants. An old shepherd, the oracle of the village, was his surgeon, and cured him by an ointment composed of various simples, among which our manuscript mentions, as the principal, moss
taken

taken from a dead man's skull and blanched by the rays of the sun : a fact which we pretend not to dispute, having little skill in such matters*.

By degrees our hero recovered so as to be able to walk. He conversed freely with his hosts on the terrible adventure that had so nearly cost him his life, on the gratitude he owed them, and the recompense that was due to their generosity : but he had neither speech nor ears when they advised him secretly to make his escape. In vain was it represented to him, that he might find it difficult to clear himself before prejudiced judges; in vain was he told that there was nobody to detain him, the men left to guard him having withdrawn : he remained true to the principle he had lately avowed at the castle of Cyly, *innocence never flies*, and resolved to wait for his accusers; or, if they did not come, to repair to Nuremberg, and take for his judges the princes who were there assembled.

* The moss which grows on the skull of a man unburied, was celebrated, in the days of superstition, for its medicinal virtues, and made a grand ingredient of the famous sympathetic powder, which was said to cure the most desperate wound, at the distance of half the globe, merely by being applied to the weapon with which the wound was inflicted. T.

The

The latter was the measure he adopted. The people of duke Rodolph, among whom was now the faithful Kurd, more attentive to the means of delivering their master, than of avenging duke Frederic, appeared to have wholly forgotten him. He was forced, therefore, to proceed to Nuremberg, and deliver himself up to the princes of the German empire, in whose justice he had the fullest confidence; or submit to bear the disgrace of being suspected of murder. His arguments at length brought over his hosts to his opinion, and they accompanied him on his way to a distance from the village, not leaving him till they arrived at the fatal tree, where treacherous sleep had been so near delivering him into the arms of death.

“Let this tree,” said he, as he quitted the crowd that accompanied him, “let this tree testify my innocence! You, my friends, believe it only from attachment to me: but why cannot this trunk speak, this trunk under the branches of which I so peaceably slept, when the lion that had devoured duke Frederic presented itself before me in my dream, and attempted to cover me with his blood? Why are not these leaves so many tongues to attest the truth? Why do not those ærial spirits, that invisibly hovered over Kunzman and me, appear,

“pear, and bear witness against the murderer?”

“Give me leave, sir knight,” said one of the oldest of the company, “to give you a word of advice. You know what we think of you; but the princes into whose hands you are going to place yourself, are not all Roberts count palatine, or Alberts of Austria. There are amongst them many, whose penetration is not clear enough to discover innocence enveloped in such obscurity; and perhaps there may be others, who would not be sorry to see the innocent suspected of their own horrid crime. Above all, trust not to the elector of Mentz. Since the assassination of duke Frederic, strange reports have been spread in the neighbourhood; and of this at least we are certain, that he and the duke were never friends.”

Having received this advice, Herman pursued his way to Nuremberg; where, on his arrival, his first business was to inquire after Ida: a circumstance from which the reader may possibly infer, that the hope of seeing her was as great an inducement to him to visit that city, as the desire of justifying his innocence.

He soon learnt that the count of Wirtemberg had just departed on a short journey, and that in the mean time his daughter remained.

mained alone at his house, out of which, however, she was never seen. He longed to have an interview with her; he was aware of the difficulty of the enterprize; but ought he, because success was uncertain, to hazard the never seeing her more?

Love rendered him bold and ingenuous, and the project with which it inspired him was so simple, and so easy of execution, that it appeared impossible for him not to succeed. Who, indeed, would dare shut the door against a knight, professing to be sent to the princess from the count of Wirtemberg, her father? He was introduced, therefore, without delay; and presented himself before her.

"Herman!" exclaimed Ida, the instant he fell at her feet; "Herman sent here by my father!"

"Would Ida be offended; should love have dictated to me this innocent stratagem."

"O Herman! Herman!" resumed the princess, stooping towards him: "where hast thou been wandering so long? And whence that deadly paleness? Whence those languid eyes?"

We have already more than once had occasion to remark, that our hero was never so well received by his mistress as when he came upon her unexpectedly. Of this she now gave a fresh proof. It was some time

time before she withdrew herself from his embrace, before she represented to him what decorum required of her ; and he was too sensible of his advantage, to recall her from her pleasing self-forgetfulness by any ill-timed question.

“ Rise, fir Herman ;” said Ida at length, blushing and turning away her lovely face : “ how strangely are we acting !”
 “ You said you brought news of my father : is he well ? will he be soon at home ?”

Herman had not yet mentioned the name of count Everard, but he did not think fit to tell her so : he thought, no doubt, that either she knew not what she said, or to hide her emotion asked the first question that occurred.

On her invitation he sat down by her side, and, after a short interval, during which neither well knew what to say, a kind of conversation between them began, which became imperceptibly more regular, and they reciprocally informed each other of what it was of most importance for them to know.

Ida’s tale was not long. Her life, under the direction of a rigid father, was as uniform as that of other young ladies of her time. In those rude and unpolished days, young women were seldom permitted to show themselves in public, and their conduct

duet was scrupulously watched, that nothing might occur to tarnish their reputation. Though the daughters of princes were sometimes an exception to this rule, count Everard was resolved, respecting Ida, to pursue the established custom. He had always present to his imagination that Herman of Unna, who had leaped from the balcony of his daughter's apartment into the garden to escape being seen, and who had so powerful an advocate in the empress. Besides, Ida was far too handsome to be exposed to the eyes of all the libertine youths whom the diet had attracted to Nuremberg. The late duke of Brunswick himself had seen her but twice, though the count had cast his eyes upon him for a son-in-law; but the duke was to become the spouse of Ida only on condition of his obtaining the imperial crown.

Herman was delighted with the princess's recital, which she delivered with her wonted frankness. In his heart, he thanked count Everard for having so carefully watched over his treasure: and he openly applauded himself, on the cunning with which he had cheated the vigilance of her guards. She hinted to him, not to be too much elated, as he was indebted for his success solely to chance, and the absence of a strict duenna, who was gone to church,
and

and whose return she expected every moment.

The most important subject of conversation, had not yet been touched by our two lovers, and there was no time to lose. Herman, therefore, hastened to relate his adventures, and the motives of his arrival at Nuremberg.

It would be superfluous to mention, the deep impression made on the heart of the young princess by his tale. Of all the dangers her dear Herman had run, that to which he was at present exposed, appeared to her the most terrible. She trembled to think that he was going voluntarily to present himself before judges, whom she was far from knowing well enough to be certain, that they would effectually protect him. She prayed, she intreated him, with tears in her eyes, to wait for his accusers, adding, that he ought to consider himself as fully justified, if they did not appear; God, and his own conscience, completely acquitting him. At any rate, prudence required him to provide for his safety by flight, till the particulars of the engagement, which had been reported to have taken place between the ravishers of duke Rodolph and his people were known, as perhaps, it would then be found, that not one of his accusers remained alive to testify against him.

He

Her looks were expressive of the mingled sentiments of love and fear, as she thus endeavoured to convince him, by reasons of every kind, good as well as bad, of the necessity of his absconding : but his resolution was unshaken.

“ Should I be worthy of thee,” cried he,
 “ could I for a moment deserve thy hand,
 “ thou model of perfection, if I sought not
 “ to clear myself from the charge of murder?
 “ der? No ; it suffices not that
 “ God and my own conscience, that you
 “ and other virtuous minds are assured of
 “ my innocence : the whole world ought
 “ to know, that Herman of Unna is not an
 “ assassin ; that at least it is not on such
 “ an account, he is forbidden to aspire
 “ to the hand of the princess of Wirtemberg.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE lovers now separated. Herman quitted the princess, with a determination to proceed in the execution of his design ; and Ida remained plunged in the profoundest sorrow. The remembrance, however,

ever, of a similar danger, to which she had herself been exposed, and the surprising manner in which she had been extricated from it, prevented her fears from being converted into despair.—“The tribunal before which I was cited, was it not infinitely more formidable?” said she to herself. “This at least will be held in open day, and in the face of the world; whereas mine was covered with eternal night Yet I escaped Be not discouraged, Ida; he is innocent; he appears voluntarily, without being accused; and, should every other means of defence be wanting, still he has his sword. No: do not despair. The ordeal to which he submits himself, will redound to his glory, and perhaps contribute to his happiness and thy own!”

Herman had quitted the apartment but a few minutes, when the duenna returned, who seldom left her, except when, to procure a few hours relief from her company, Ida feigned indisposition. The princess had been a stranger to falsehood and dissimulation, till a strict and suspicious watch over her, had in a manner compelled her to have recourse to them. She trembled lest the name of the young man who had visited her should be asked. He had entered and gone out in presence of all the people who waited in the anti-chamber.

She

She was too noble-minded to desire her domestic to conceal the circumstance ; and she expected every moment, that Cunegunda would put some question to her, which she should not know how to answer. For this time, however, her alarms were false ; even her melancholy did not appear to be observed ; nor was it till the evening of the following day, that the old lady introduced a conversation, little calculated to give consolation to our fair mourner.

“ Will your tears never cease, princess ? ” said the duenna : It appears to me, that they flow more copiously within this day or two.”

“ It may be so.”

“ And for what reason ? Why conceal it from me ? Is it a crime for a young lady of your age to be in love ; or, when so unfortunate in her attachment, to lament the loss of her lover ? ”

The tears of Ida increased.

“ Poor child ! To lose him in so terrible a manner too, by murder ! Yet you have one comfort left ; the crime will be revenged ; his death will not go unpunished ; the criminal has surrendered himself.”

Ida dried her tears, and looking steadfastly at the duenna, with a countenance of despair : “ Of whom,” said she, “ art thou talking ? ”

"The assassin of duke Frederic, your betrothed husband, I say, has surrendered himself into the hands of justice."

"Well! and he has been acquitted, I hope? You know I know No matter, he is known to be innocent."

"Permit me, princess, to ask, in my turn, of whom you are talking?"

"Of Sir Oh! my head is bewildered! I know not what I say. Pray, if you must talk, talk by yourself, for you see I am not in a state to answer you."

The old lady began a tale, which made so deep an impression upon Ida, that at its conclusion her senses forsook her. How was it possible for her to hear without emotion, that Herman had appeared before the tribunal of princes; that he had faithfully related every circumstance, both for and against himself; and that, instead of being instantly acquitted, he had been sent to prison, and ordered to be closely confined, till further information could be obtained.

"I intreat you," said Ida, after she had come to herself, and been tormented with a thousand questions respecting her sudden indisposition, which she answered, no doubt, incoherently enough. "I intreat you to begin your tale again. If the
"desire

“ desire of seeing duke Frederic avenged,
“ be, as you suppose, the cause of my
“ illness, you ought to conceal nothing
“ from me. Tell me then, in the first
“ place, who were his who were
“ the judges of the stranger ?”

“ Judges, indeed !” God and all his
“ saints forgive them !” cried the duenna :
“ Such judges were surely never seen
“ since the world began ! I except, how-
“ ever, the elector of Mentz ; he did his
“ duty ; it was he who ordered the mur-
“ derer to be seized and sent to prison.”

“ Seized and sent to prison ! Were you
“ present ?”

“ Yes : the judges were sitting in open
“ court as I came this morning from
“ mass.”

“ It is impossible ! The world cannot
“ be so blind as not to see his innocence.
“ But tell me, who were the rest of
“ his judges ?”

“ The majority were favourable to him,
“ and would have acquitted him, but they
“ were over-ruled.”

“ Worthy, virtuous men ! But
“ their names, their names, Cunegunda !”

“ You know, as well as I, the prince
“ who has the most influence here, and
“ who is sure to take care, that no good
“ shall be done. You must not, therefore,

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“ expect

"expect to be the daughter of an emperor, as long as"

"Oh! do not thus urge my patience beyond bearing! Let who will be emperor, so this poor"

"Ah! princess, princess!" interrupted Cunegunda, holding up her finger in an action of threatening "But, no matter; I will indulge you for once. The persons most inclined to favour this man, for whom, God knows why, you are so greatly interested, were Robert count Palatine, duke Albert, and old Jadoc of Moravia; all rivals, and secret enemies of your father; perhaps, too, accomplices in the death of your promised husband, and therefore, defenders of the assassin, who certainly would not have presented himself, had he not been sure of finding in them an unjust protection."

"And the elector of Mentz?" said Ida.

"He alone did his duty. He ordered the murderer to be detained, in spite of the opposition of his partisans, the number of whom increased every moment, and who would forthwith have set him at liberty."

"And do you think, my dear Cunegunda, he runs no risk of being assassinated in his prison?"

"What the murderer?"

“ Oh, do not give him so odious an appellation! How can you be so embittered against a stranger?”

“ A stranger! In truth, princess, I believe the chevalier Unna is more a stranger to me than to you: but . . . I wish your father was returned.”

From this period there subsisted a coolness between the princess and her gover-nante. Ida, ashamed of having suffered her secret to be thus penetrated, hated the enemy of the innocent Herman; while the old duenna, having learnt all she wanted to know, and having no need of any fresh explanation, took care to be silent respecting the farther proceedings in this affair. Indeed she had nothing to communicate but what would have been pleasing to the empress, and her heart was too black, too malevolent, to think of affording consolation, however oppressed might be the mind that wanted it.

Herman had presented himself before the princes. His simple and ingenuous tale, clothed in the artless language of truth; his interesting figure; his open countenance; no equivocal index of the candour and goodness of his heart; his voluntary appearance; all spoke in his favour, and would have been sufficient to exculpate him from the crime of which he was accused, had even no other witnesses appeared to attest his innocence. But the

D 2

peasants

peasants of the village where Herman had been cured of his wounds, having his safety at heart, had followed him, and presented themselves in court the moment he appeared before his judges.

In those days justice was administered in a more expeditious and summary way than at present. The friends of Herman, who were at the same time the friends of virtue, Robert, Albert, and Jadoc, had too ardent a desire of rendering innocence triumphant, and of humbling the elector of Mentz, not to insist on the trial's being resumed the next day; and it was then that our hero was completely acquitted and obtained his discharge. Kurd, commander of the guards of the murdered prince, appeared, and was examined apart. His deposition agreed perfectly with that of Herman, and he declared, that he had no complaint to make against him, but, on the contrary, that he believed him innocent. He produced the lock of hair which he had torn from the head of the assassin as he escaped, and which evidently belonged not to the prisoner.

The friends of our knight listened with great pleasure to this deposition; but the elector of Mentz did not appear to be satisfied till he learnt that Kunzman had ultimately escaped, as well as an accomplice that was with him. The enemies of Her-
man

man were then desirous of inferring that he might be the accomplice who fled. But Jadoc observed that it was for them, not the prisoner, to prove this; which, from the testimonies exhibited of his innocence, he was sure they would find impossible.

To relate all that was urged on both sides the question would be tedious; suffice it therefore to say, that Herman's innocence was judicially acknowledged, and that many of the princes could not avoid entertaining suspicions of John of Mentz, to whom they scrupled not to hint them. It may be proper also to add, that Kunzman, the murderer of duke Frederic, was in the service of the elector.

Of the several princes, whose affection our hero had gained on this occasion, not one was more attached to him than the young Albert of Austria, whose character was regarded as a miniature likeness of Herman. History speaks highly of the virtues of Albert, and particularly of his generosity. Judge, reader, from this, what must have been the character of the chevalier Unna.

The young knight had the good fortune to please duke Albert at first sight. His great qualities, far from exciting envy in this prince, determined him to unite himself to our youth by the bonds of the tenderest

dearest friendship; and to set aside all difference of rank and birth.

The trial being at an end, duke Albert gave Herman an invitation to come and see him. It was with difficulty he could refrain from testifying at once the inclination he felt for him; but prudence required that he should avoid, by a too sudden disclosure, exciting pride in him, and jealousy perhaps in others. Herman was requested to relate his adventures; a request with which he complied, and he spoke with so much frankness of what concerned himself, and so much discretion of those who figured in his story, that the good opinion Albert had conceived of him was so far increased as to make him forget his resolution; and Herman, ere he quitted the house, where, a few hours before, his fate was pending, was received into the number of the principal gentlemen of that prince, justly esteemed one of the most virtuous of his time.

Ida knew nothing of this happy change. Her governante, as we have observed, did not think proper to acquaint her with any thing pleasing respecting her lover, of whom count Everard, when he gave his daughter to her charge, had particularly directed her to be cautious, but who, notwithstanding, as the duenna learnt, had been adroit enough to elude her vigilance, and

and procure an interview with the princess.

The sole thing of which Ida was informed was, that Herman's fate was that day to be decided. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that she passed the night which preceded it without sleep, and the morning in extreme agitation.

From her window she had seen the princes assemble at the house of old Jadoc. She felt, as she saw those enter whom Cunegunda had mentioned as friendly to Herman, a sentiment of gratitude, and of hatred at sight of the others, particularly the elector of Mentz. The prisoner was brought under a strong guard. By their armour she could distinguish the people of the late duke of Brunswic. The duenna explained to her their intentions with the most provoking malignity. The trial had lasted for some hours, yet nothing could induce her to quit the window but her extreme weariness, which at length she could no longer support.

The princess had been put to bed, and Cunegunda, who believed her to be asleep, had gone out in quest of news to satisfy her malicious curiosity. She soon learned, what would have imparted instant ease and revive the drooping spirits of her charge, but she was too cruel to administer the remedy.

Meanwhile Ida had lain on her bed without sleeping. An uncommon noise, which she

she heard in the street, excited her attention ; she forgot her feebleness, and ran to the window. The people were rushing in crowds from the house of Jadoc, and she fancied that she could distinguish in their shouts some words of comfort.

The crowd increased. Presently duke Albert appeared on horseback with his attendants. The person nearest to him, and who seemed rather to ride by his side than to follow him, was a young man of the size and stature of Herman, and accoutred like him. The duke was in familiar conversation with him, and appeared to pay him particular attention.

Ida opened the window to obtain a better view. The cavalcade now passed near her. The young man, whose rose-coloured sleeve she could easily distinguish, was no other than Herman himself. She felt as if she should expire with joy. The moment our knight of fidelity perceived her, he kissed the badge of his order, as if to say : “ for thee only do I wear it.” Duke Albert also saw and respectfully saluted the princess. A confused murmur was heard among the people, which presently broke out into shouts of “ long live duke Albert, the “ protector of innocence ! long live the “ good sir Herman, so honourably acquitted !”

The

The rapture of Ida was so great that she could no longer support it. She turned round, and flew with open arms to Cune-gunda, who at that moment entered.—“He is saved!” cried she; “he is saved!” and instantly fainted.

CHAPTER VIII.

DAYS and weeks passed away. Ida thought herself happy in knowing that her beloved chevalier was secure under the protection of duke Albert, and in seeing him pass every day beneath her window. Yet she could not help regretting that she was not permitted to speak to him. She saw him, but she saw him only at a distance; all his endeavours to obtain access to her being frustrated by the vigilance of Cune-gunda. Sweet mixture of pleasure and pain which connoisseurs tell us, enhances the enjoyments of love.

Meanwhile Ida continually hoped to see her lover still nearer, and beyond this she had scarcely a desire. It was possible, she thought, that, by some lucky chance, he might again deceive the Argus' eyes of the dienna; or that they might meet at church,

or at some place of entertainment, which Ida now seemed extremely desirous of frequenting. But Cunegunda was inexorable. She could not conceive how so virtuous a princess should imbibe all at once a taste for balls and other amusements, where young libertines of fashion were sure to assemble, or at least she pretended not to be able to conceive it; and consoled her with the hope of the speedy return of her father.

At length the count of Wirtemberg arrived. He had a long conference with the governante, of which his cold and reserved behaviour to Ida was not the only consequence; for whenever he returned from the assembly of the princes, whether they had met on business or on pleasure, he appeared extremely out of humour, and frequently treated her with harshness andasperity.

One day Ida happened to be at the window with her father, when Herman and duke Albert passed by. As his mistress was not alone, the knight kissed not his rose-coloured sleeve, but he made her a respectful obeisance. Ida blushed, and was silent. But presently, reflecting that her silence might appear like affectation, and that it would be more natural to make some remark on what was then the universal topic of conversation, she said, with some hesitation:

tion: "Sir Herman of Unna is is
 "much to be pitied is deserving
 "of the highest commendation . . . his
 "situation was extremely perilous, . . How
 "happy . . that . . , he is so warmly esteem-
 "ed by duke Albert . . . and . . . that his
 "innocence has been acknowledged."

Count Everard pretended not to remark the confusion of his daughter. He answered only, in a tone of peevishness, to the latter part of her speech: that duke Albert was fond of every man that at all resembled himself, and that with respect to Herman's innocence, new charges were continually rising up against him, which rendered it extremely dubious.—Ida requested an explanation, but the count left her without giving her an answer.

She now exerted herself for some days, so far to master her feelings, as to be able to speak of Herman without emotion; an attempt in which she at length succeeded. This was a necessary step, as she had enquiries to make, which, without the practice of a little address, she could not have satisfied.

"Sir Herman, I find, is not so innocent as he appeared to be," said she to Cune-ganda one day, when, after their return from mass, the chevalier had bowed to her as he passed.

"I told

"I told you so at first," replied the duenna.

"But what new proofs have they alleged against him?"

"Oh, enough, princess, proofs enough! Has not a sabre, with his name engraved on it, been found in the forest, a very little way from the spot where the duke of Brunswic was assassinated. And did not Kunzman of Hertingshausen, who has since been apprehended, and who, a few days ago, received the reward of his crime, declare, before he died, that Herman was his accomplice?"

Ida turned pale, fixed her eyes on the duenna, and was unable to speak.

"Beside, was not Herman in the service of king Sigismund, who, at the instigation of his wicked wife, hated, it seems, duke Frederic, and sought to take his life?"

The princess recollected, that Herman had mentioned this circumstance in the account he had given her of his history. She trembled, her paleness increased. She recollected also, that one of the motives which had induced her lover to repair to Nuremberg, was to acquaint duke Frederic with the conspiracy forming against him.

"But what tends most to throw suspicion on him," continued Cunegunda, "is the advantage he would have reaped
I from

“ from the death of the duke, or rather
“ which he foolishly promised himself he
“ should reap.”

“ Advantage! what advantage?” Cried
Ida with trepidation, seizing the hand of
Cunegunda.

“ Sweet simplicity! said the governante.
“ And you really cannot guess? You do
“ not know that the duke of Brunswic was
“ betrothed to the princess of Wirtem-
“ berg, and that Sir Herman of Unna is
“ her lover?”

Cunegunda, as she uttered these words, which were accompanied with a malicious smile, withdrew, and left Ida in a state difficult to describe. It will not be supposed that the venom which fell from the lips of this fury, was capable of infecting the mind of the princess with doubts respecting the young knight's innocence; but this much is certain, that, from the manner in which the accusation had been stated to her, she feared it might be made to assume a face very unfavourable to her lover, and that thus he would be plunged into fresh misfortunes.

What indeed could be more alarming? Meanwhile there was one thing, and but one that tended to quiet her apprehensions: she had heard that a person once declared innocent, could not be tried again on the same charge. The calm produced by this reflection

reflection was however of short duration. A considerable intimacy took place between her father and John of Mentz. She trembled whenever she saw this enemy of her lover enter the house. At length his visits became so frequent, that suspicion crept into her mind, and she sought to discover their motive.

The delicate Ida, while the daughter of a simple citizen, had never so far degraded herself as to act the mean part of a listener. Whether she had acquired this new talent from her acquaintance with courts; or whether love had endowed her with it, or whether it were the mere effects of chance that she had fallen asleep behind the hangings in her father's closet, one day when the duke of Mentz had a private conference with him, we pretend not to decide: the reader may solve the enigma as he thinks best. She overheard however a conversation in which the name of Herman was frequently repeated; and from the following letter we may guess what was its nature, what she thought of it, and how she determined to act. We say guess, because, the mystery having never been fully explained, we have only our penetration to guide us.

LETTER FROM IDA OF WIRTEMBERG,
TO HERMAN OF UNNA.

HERMAN, is it a dream? Or is it a reality? I have learnt things that most nearly concern you. Consider what I am going to tell you at least as a truth. Obey my injunctions: it is your Ida who exacts obedience Fly, Herman, fly! Vengeance pursues thee! Thy prince, exalted as is his goodness, great as is his power, will not dare be thy protector. The INVISIBLE are thine enemies!

This single sentence, I first thought would be sufficient to induce you to depart, the only step that now remains for you, and I had intended to close with it my letter. I am obliged to steal from sleep the moments I devote to you, and, in my present situation, I am unable to write much. But my fears whisper that you may refuse to obey me, that you may regard my dream as one of those ordinary reveries to which no faith is to be given. I will therefore tell you all, that you may judge for yourself of the dangers that threaten you.

I heard two men talking of you. One of them appeared to be my father. But no, it could not be he! for can the father of Ida be the enemy of innocence? Could he

he be influenced by the perfidious insinuations of a villain, who wishes perhaps to escape the punishment of his own crime by charging it on you? I listened, secretly listened in a dream, as it seems to me; for your Ida is not accustomed to such practices when awake and I heard these men say to one another, that you were the murderer of duke Frederic. Your sabre found near the place where he had fallen, the deposition of Kunzman at the scaffold, and the secret enmity you were supposed to bear to the betrothed spouse of Ida of Wirtemberg, were the arguments employed to prove your guilt; it was added, that the princes having acquitted you would be of no avail; your crime was of a nature to come within the cognizance of another tribunal Oh, Herman! That infernal tribunal, which your Ida but too well knows.

My dream is not yet finished. You know there are dreams which have the same duration and the same consistency as the events of our lives which pass when we are awake I heard, I thought, the conversation I have related, word for word; and I immediately began to reflect on the means of saving you. Some days elapsed. I saw a number of strangers in my father's house, among whom I once observed Walter, the man with one hand. I remember him well. A journey was
talked

talked of, which my father was about to undertake. I guessed what was its object. I bribed one of the servants, appointed to attend him, and with difficulty prevailed on him to let me take his place. I disguised myself in the black dress which he brought me, and repaired to my post. We set off. The count of Wirtemberg was attended only by me and another domestic.

Our way was not long. Strange as it may seem, we entered, I thought, that ruinous building, which perhaps you have observed, at a little distance north of the city. . . . But for heaven's sake, Herman be discreet; occasion not our ruin! You are not ignorant how important it is to keep silence on this subject. Beside, is it not all a dream?

The count and his principal domestic entered without any question being asked. My figure probably appearing new to the three persons who guarded the gate, they examined me by some very extraordinary questions. They asked me the four ways to hell, and I answered in the words I had been taught the same evening by the servant who yielded me his place. They farther asked me, how many steps led to the judgment seat on which sat the Eternal to administer justice. I answered, thirty; for I recollected that to be the number I counted, you knew upon what occasion,
and

and which I had been obliged to ascend with such feelings of horror. They shook their heads, blindfolded me, and let me pass. The number thirty saved my life. I wandered in the dark : I had neither supporter nor guide. I counted the steps, and, having ascended thirty, the way became level. My eyes were then uncovered. I found myself in a place similar to what you have perhaps seen. The signal was given, and the session commenced. Accusations were read and some witnesses deposed against a prince, whom they charged with being the murderer of duke Frederic. Immediately one of the judges rose and swore that he was innocent. An oath of this nature, you know, once saved the life of an innocent person ; why might it not be equally capable of saving that of a guilty one ?

To these accusations, to these witnesses, others succeeded. Your name, Herman, your name was pronounced ! But no one would swear for you. I was going to advance, when the man with one hand, whom I then first observed by my side, held me back, threatening me with his finger. In short, you were accused and condemned. " Let vengeance, secret as the night, pursue his steps ! Let punishment invisibly await him ! " cried a voice from the throne. " When awake, deceive him by false pre-

" traces,

" tences, and draw him into some snare
" that may facilitate the execution of his
" sentence. Let the poignard watch the
" moment of his sleep. Let him be put
" to death wherever he be found alone.
" Let his bosom-friend become his execu-
" tioner ; let him entice him into some so-
" litary place, and massacre him in open
" day, in the face of that heaven which
" he has offended by the sight of innocent
" blood. Frederic lost his life in secret,
" and without any warning : so perish,
" with all his sins upon his head, Herman
" of Unna !"

As the last words were uttered I should certainly have screamed with terror, had not my protector stopped my mouth. It was he also, I believe, who conveyed me more dead than alive out of this assembly of demons. He had discovered me notwithstanding my disguise. He loaded me with reproaches on my imprudence ; and left me at the gate of my father's house, after having exacted a promise of silence, which I have kept as faithfully as was possible.

What was I now to do ? Escape and fly to you ; or wait the return of my father, and abide his wrath ? Already by the light of the moon I saw him at a distance accompanied by his domestic. I adopted the most ready expedient : I knocked at the door.

door ; it was opened ; and I rushed to my apartment. Cunegunda was astonished at my having so completely deceived her vigilance, and that, while she believed me asleep But what am I doing ? Is it not, however, a dream Yet again I charge you to fly. Fly, Herman, fly ! The secret avengers pursue you : they thirst for your blood ! I ought not to warn you of this ; but surely I may relate a dream.

CHAPTER IX.

HERMAN, as we have before observed, was sufficiently happy to have found, in his master, a friend. No sooner had he recovered himself from the perturbation in which he was thrown, by the preceding letter brought to him by a stranger, than he hastened to duke Albert, and presented him the fatal scroll. They consulted together, and duke Albert was finally of opinion, that Herman had no other means of saving himself from his pursuers than by flight ; and that even this would be futile, unless he could keep himself concealed, or obtain

obtain the protection of some superior power. "We must part, Herman," said he, "We must part. Ida is in the right. Thy prince is too weak to defend thee against the arms of these invisible avengers."

"What, leave you, replied Herman, on account of a dream!"

"And can you seriously, my friend, believe it to be a dream? No, no: obey the princess then, and be gone."

"But . . . whither can I go?"

"To king Sigismund."

"I, become the slave of the vilest of women!" replied Herman, forgetting that Albert was soon to be related to the royal house, by marrying Elizabeth, daughter of Sigismund and Mary.

Albert smiled, and thus continued: "Go then to the duke of Saxony, the chief of all the secret tribunals. He is best able to protect you, if you can prove to him satisfactorily your innocence."

"But Rodolph, being the friend and relation of the unfortunate duke of Brunswick, is perhaps already too much prejudiced against me, to listen to the language of truth."

"What think you, of your relation, the old count of Unna? He is one of the chiefs of the secret tribunals of West-

“ Westphalia, and will surely not refuse
“ you protection.”

“ What! the avowed enemy of our fa-
“ mily! I dare not trust him.”

“ Have you ever seen him? Do you
“ at all know how he is disposed towards
“ you?”

“ No.”

“ Herman, I know him. The count of
“ Unna is a man of frankness, sincerity
“ and truth. You have never, I think,
“ offended him? Go to him then: you
“ may rely on his protection.”

“ His enmity against the house of Unna,
“ was occasioned by the contention of
“ the knights of St. Martin with count
“ Wirtemberg. I was then but eight years
“ old.”

“ Take my advice, Herman, throw thy-
“ self into his arms; he will defend thee,
“ and render thy innocence triumphant.”

Herman obeyed, and the next night set
off for Westphalia, without having been
able, notwithstanding the many efforts he
made, to thank the princess of Wirtem-
berg, either personally or by letter. Mean-
while Ida passed her days in sorrow, in the
house of her father. Cunegunda watched
her more narrowly than ever, and the
count of Wirtemberg manifested in his
behaviour to her the utmost distrust. The
flight of Herman, which was soon known,
operated

operated to render her situation still worse. Incessantly tormented with captious questions and oblique reproaches, she lamented her rank, and regretted that she was not still, what she had so long been supposed to be, the daughter of a virtuous citizen. O Munster, how many sighs were drawn from her, by the remembrance of thy peaceful habitation at Prague! How many tears attested her ardent desire to see thee, to ask thy counsel, and to obtain thy assistance, in circumstances so difficult! "Ah!" said she, "he promised Herman never to forsake me, and yet years are passed away! . . ."

Ida had forgotten, that, to save her life, Munster had entered into that secret society, which despotically ruled its members, and could, with absolute authority, determine the place where they should reside, and the employments they should undertake. Munster had before obeyed no laws but those of virtue and his own heart. But since his taking this rash step, of entering into a society of the nature of which he was ignorant, the count of Wirtemberg had been his master; and we have more proofs than one, that the count had much rather he should be at Prague, than near his daughter.

The heart of count Everard, since the occurrence of a late event, of which he,

as well as Ida, avoided any mention, seemed alienated from his daughter. His conduct displayed something more than indifference, it appeared to border on hatred. His mind was in a constant state of disquietude, and every instant he was changing his designs. At length he one day declared, all of a sudden, that he was under the necessity of quitting Germany, to seek his safety in some foreign land.

"Your safety!" replied Ida with astonishment, and trembling.

"Yes traitress! And it is you, or at least your imprudence that drives me hence. The crimes of children are imputed to their parents."

"Is it possible," cried Ida, clasping her hands and weeping: "Is it possible, I can have such a fault to reproach myself with!"

"You have sacrificed your father, to save your unworthy lover."

"Alas! I knew not the consequences of what I did, and . . . Herman was innocent!"

"I thought otherwise. His crime was represented to me so clearly, that I could not doubt. But I can now almost believe him innocent, since I am myself likely to become the victim of appearances."

"What

"What are those appearances, then?"
"Oh, tell me!" exclaimed Ida, falling at his feet.

"Of having taken you to a place, where you had no right to appear; of having acquainted Herman with the sentence that was passed upon him, and assisted his escape,"

"It is I, it is I alone who am guilty! and to save you, I will declare it before the whole world."

"It is too late! It is too late!" replied count Everard, pushing her from him.
"Farewell! Be happy if thou canst! I must leave thee to thy fate."

The count departed, leaving his daughter in the utmost anguish. Grief for the situation of her lover, and her father, and the severe reproaches she made herself, were almost too much for the human frame to support, and in a few days reduced her to the brink of the grave. We may doubt, whether the danger to which she was personally exposed, was considered by her as any augmentation of her sufferings. Self seemed out of the question; seemed to be a thing to which she was totally indifferent, and some strong external impulse was necessary, to excite her to think of her security.

One night, when it was late, Cunegunda, the most obliging of creatures, now
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that Ida was her own mistress, entered, and announced a stranger. The stranger stood at the door, and asked to speak with the princess in private.

"Do you know me?" said he, after looking at her for some time.

She hesitated.

"Do you recollect this arm?" added he, throwing back his cloak.

Ida observed the deficiency of the hand, and recognized Walter.

"Can you not guess what brings me hither? Your safety I come to warn you Since the departure of your father, you are yourself in the greatest danger. If you persist in remaining here, the past, as well as the present, will be examined anew. It is absolutely necessary that you should fly O princess! of what unhappiness has your imprudence been the occasion of! Where is the presumptuous man that dared lend you his dress for this adventure? Where is your father, who is suspected of having been privy to it? And what is to become of me who was totally ignorant of the affair, but am now involved in it by my compassion? You know, that I did not discover you, till it was too late, till you had actually seen what no profane eye ought to behold."

"You

"You too involved?" cried Ida, raising her hands to heaven.

"Yes, I too. I am suspected of having procured your admittance. There are yet no proofs against me, but, as they wish to get rid of a person, already blackened by suspicion, they are busily inquiring into things, which...." I cannot wholly deny; Walter would have said, but a sorrowful shrug of the shoulders, supplied the deficiency of the sentence.

The reader may perhaps have observed, that Walter had not always the art of framing his answers suitable to the inviolable reserve of a free judge. He had more than once infringed on the duty imposed on him by the title, in favour of Munster, of Ida, and perhaps even of Herman. It could be proved too, that he was the steward of Conrad of Langen, condemned by the secret tribunal, and there were strong presumptions, that his oblique hints had furnished Conrad with the means of so frequently escaping its vengeance. This indeed, was his true crime; the adventure of Ida being only a pretext employed in order to lead to its discovery. But the princess, as if she had not sorrow enough of her own, understood what he had said in its literal sense, and considering herself as the sole cause of the misfortunes that threatened him, she

became thereby plunged still deeper in the abyss of misery. She forgot the motive of Walter's visit; she forgot to ask what means she was to take for her safety; and remained in a state of absolute insensibility till the next day, when a visit from duke Albert restored to her her feelings.

The noble duke of Austria had frequently visited the princess since the absence of count Everard. He had always esteemed her; and Herman might have saved himself the trouble of requesting the duke to watch over her and not leave her to her fate, as he felt himself voluntarily disposed to it.

Ida had already bestowed her confidence on the friends of her lover. To discover the cause of her new unhappiness, he had only to ask the question, which he did, and was immediately informed of what had passed the preceding night.

Though duke Albert was not affiliated to the secret tribunal, he knew enough on the subject to console her. He had before calmed in a manner her apprehensions respecting her father's fate, and he now attempted the same respecting that of honest Walter, to whom she owed too many obligations not to be interested in it.

"As to the count of Wirtemberg, I have already observed," said he, "that the place he holds in the society of the
"invisibles,

“ invisibles, is probably too elevated for
“ him to have any thing to fear from his
“ brethren, on a simple suspicion, farther
“ than a temporary deposition from his
“ dignities, and orders to retire to some
“ place of secrecy, as well from regard to
“ appearances, as to inspire the inferior
“ members of the tribunal with wholesome
“ fear, and induce them to discharge with
“ punctuality the duties of their oath. This
“ indeed, at the present moment, cannot
“ but be extremely disagreeable to your
“ father, as it obliges him to quit the as-
“ sembly of competitors for the imperial
“ crown before the accomplishment of his
“ grand design : but there is no reason to
“ entertain any apprehensions for his life.
“ And as to Walter, it is much easier for
“ a subaltern to escape, than a judge of
“ distinction ; and his only punishment
“ will probably consist in being deprived
“ of his office, a deprivation that I can
“ easily repair by my protection and boun-
“ ty.”

It was absolutely necessary that Albert should begin with removing the fears of the princess respecting those whom she had reduced to difficulties and dangers, if he would rouse her attention, and point it to herself. For how could he ever have prevailed on her to seek her own safety, while so strongly alarmed for that of others?

Having

Having thus paved the way, he entered on what he conceived to be the most important subject. He pointed out to the princess the peril to which she was exposed, and endeavoured to convince her that it was not so slight as she imagined. "Reflect," said he, "reflect once more on the words of Walter: '*Both the present and the past will be examined anew.*' Probably you will not be brought to account solely for what shall I call it? your imprudent dream. Your innocence on a former occasion was acknowledged only in consequence of the oath of the count of Wirtemberg, and as he is divested of his dignities, the oath is now perhaps annulled, so that you may be exposed afresh to the malice of your enemies. How many things may happen before your father is in a situation to come to your succour! Who knows whether secret plans be not already formed to entrap you? Who knows whether, like Herman, you are not condemned to be put to death secretly and without warning?"

In this manner did the good Albert continue to talk to the young princess till he succeeded in convincing her of the necessity of flight. She even resolved not to defer it for a day, and to chuse for her retreat whatever place he should recommend; giving

ing him however to understand, that, as to the latter point, she believed she had a plan better than any thing he could propose.

Albert smiled, and asked where she wished to direct her steps.

"It is not a duty incumbent on me," said she, "to repair, in her present misfortune, to my friend Sophia, and prove to her that, formerly, when surrounded with all the splendor of a throne, she did not bestow her favour on one capable of ingratitude?"

"The sentiment," replied the duke, "does honour to your heart: but consider princess, that your object is to remain concealed, and that this is impossible in a place in which the depraved Winceslaus resides."

"Well then," said Ida, "I have a second plan that is not liable to this objection. The peaceful habitation in which I was educated at Prague will be an asylum perfectly secure. I will visit him whom I once called my father, her who acted to me as a mother; I will again become the humble Ida Munster, and I shall then once more be happy."

"And will it not be there that your pursuers will first direct their search after you? The idea of retiring to a place where you spent the happiest days of your life,

“ life, is so natural, that, believe me,
“ princess, it will occur to them as well
“ as to you.”

“ Alas ! where then am I to go ? Whi-
“ ther, whither am I to wander ? Is there
“ on earth no safety for persecuted inno-
“ cence ?”

“ Yes, I will tell you where you may
“ be safe. There is a young lady, a wor-
“ thy and amiable creature to whom I
“ have been betrothed from my infancy.
“ My love for her could alone enable me
“ to converse with the charming princess
“ of Wirtemberg in the unimpassioned lan-
“ guage of friendship. It is the daughter
“ of Sigismond by his former queen Mary.
“ She lives in Hungary, in the retirement
“ of a convent, situated in the depth of a
“ forest amidst the Carpathian mountains.
“ Thither I wish you to be conducted. She
“ will love you as a sister ; no one will
“ suspect your retreat ; and if by chance it
“ should be discovered, the sanctity of the
“ place, and the respect due to her whose
“ friend you will become, will be your pro-
“ tection. O Ida, if you knew my Eliza-
“ beth, you would think her worthy of
“ your confidence. She is yet young, but
“ early misfortune has rendered her wise.
“ She possesses not perhaps all the personal
“ beauty of the princess of Wirtemberg ;
“ but

“ but her mind ! her angelic mind !

“ is the counterpart of your own ! ”

The emotion of duke Albert, as he pronounced these words, was visible. He rose hastily, pressed the hand of Ida, and quitted the apartment.

The heart of our heroine was not less moved. She was penetrated with the liveliest gratitude towards her friend, though there was something in his manner which made her not sorry for his departure. Meanwhile she thought too modestly of her own charms, she had too good an opinion of the constancy of a knight like Albert, to fear his failing, on her account, in his fidelity to Elizabeth. No ; that appeared to her as impossible as for herself to forget her beloved Herman.

The good genius however, which ever accompanies innocence, whispered notwithstanding frequently in her ear, and particularly on this occasion, that Albert's attentions to her were too lively, too tender, and that flight was the best measure she could take.

In the afternoon he returned. “ Princess,” said he, “ I interpreted your silence this morning into consent. Accordingly every thing is ready for your journey ; you may depart this very night. In the mean time, permit me, till the hour arrives, to bear you company. It would

“ be painful to me to leave you, and I
“ have besides things of importance to
“ communicate, which I could wish my
“ Elizabeth to learn from your mouth.
“ You will perhaps be the means of ren-
“ dering us happier than we had hopes of
“ being, and of our finding a mother
“ whom, alas! we have long supposed
“ dead ; but who, I have lately been given
“ to understand by Herman, is still alive.”

The confidence which duke Albert reposed in the princess of Wirtemberg claimed of itself some attention, and the manner in which he expressed himself interested her still more. She lost therefore not a syllable of the project which, during the few hours they spent together, he imparted to her. She already knew from Herman that the countess of Cyly had declared queen Mary to be living ; but she now first heard where this unfortunate queen resided, and by what means it was intended to draw her from her obscurity, and restore her to the place which belonged to her, now occupied by the worthless Barbe.

The project of Albert appeared vast and difficult of accomplishment to the princess of Wirtemberg ; but she promised punctually to observe the directions he gave her ; and, having taken leave of him, she at length set off on her journey, which was prolonged

prolonged more than half by the precautions she thought herself obliged to take to prevent being surprized.

CHAPTER X.

HERMAN's journey was shorter and less hazardous. To avoid the snares that might be laid for him, he generally travelled by night, and had disguised himself so as not to be known. Thus he arrived without the smallest accident in the territories of the old count of Unna. Eager to recover the imprescriptible rights of man, namely, security and the liberty of appearing with undisguised and open countenance among his brethren of mankind, he delayed not a moment the visit he purposed to make to a person, who, according to duke Albert, was able to restore him to the enjoyment of these blessings. Divesting himself therefore of every unfavourable prejudice towards his relation, that had been instilled into his infant mind, and endeavouring to recollect all that would awaken confidence, he no sooner arrived than he demanded audience of the old

old count for a stranger, commissioned by duke Albert of Austria to impart to him an affair of the greatest importance.

The count of Unna was absent. Some new disputes, that had arisen between the count of Tecklenburg and the bishop of Munster, in which he was chosen arbiter, had called him some weeks from home, and Herman was obliged to wait with patience his return. Accordingly he had sufficient leisure to reflect on the singularity of his situation. He found himself in his native country; he saw around him a hundred places he had known when a child. Mixed ideas, pleasing and unpleasing, were recalled to his mind. The sole motive of his visit to this district was to ask succour of a man against whom he had imbibed prejudices that he could not yet entirely surmount. In the neighbourhood lived his brothers and sisters with whom his infancy had been spent, but on whom, in his present difficulty, he dared not confide.

The reader will recollect, that at the age of twelve or thirteen years, Herman had fled from the terrors of a convent, in which he was on the point of being immured, to become one of the pages of the emperor Winceslaus. So libertine a step could not fail to displease his relations, most of whom, male as well as female, had embraced

embraced a monastic life; accordingly they had since held little correspondence with the graceless fugitive.

Herman had been at first too happy, and afterwards too much occupied by his various adventures to concern himself much about his family. He had had little communication with any of them, except his sisters, Agnes and Petronilla, once the loved companions of his tender years, but who since, sacrificed to the interest of their elder brother, had taken the veil in the convent of Uberwasser.

The art of letter-writing was then not much in use, and few attended to it so little as those decorated with the order of knighthood. We may presume, therefore, that Herman was no very punctual correspondent. Yet our manuscript informs us that no important event happened to him, with which he did not acquaint the nuns of Uberwasser: and that he received no present, however small, in which Agnes and Petronilla did not share.

I will not enquire, whether these nuns were always so prudent as not to betray the confidence he placed in them: but certain it is that his elder brothers and sisters were acquainted with all the leading occurrences of his life. From these Herman received on different occasions, some very extraordinary letters. At one time
his

his brother, the canon of Munster, at another his sister, the abbess of Marienhagen, wrote to tell him their sentiments, at such a distance, of things that passed in a world with which they were totally unacquainted.

The remonstrances with which these letters were filled, had never been well received by our mettlesome youth; and he had uniformly been so unpolite as to leave them unanswered; a circumstance from which he had reason to presume that the regard these personages of his family formerly entertained for him must be totally extinguished, and their displeasure, on account of his escape to the court of Wincesslaus, considerably augmented.

These therefore were not the relations, that, on his arrival in his native soil, he was desirous of seeing. But he felt differently respecting another brother, destined like himself for a cloister, and his sisters Agnes and Petronilla, with whom he frequently wished to beguile the hours, while he solitarily waited the return of the old count of Unna. At length he ventured to enquire after them, and was informed that his brother John had quitted the convent to enter into the teutonic order of knights, but that the nuns of Uberwasser were still in their monastery.

The

The count's stay being protracted, and Herman finding himself perfectly in the midst of strangers, he resolved to visit the monastery. He wanted some friendly bosom into which he might pour the overflowings of his heart.

He presented himself and was admitted to the grate of the parlour. Agnes and Petronilla were there, but they were not alone. His heart was on the wing to meet them; but the presence of a third person was a restraint on him, and induced him to withhold the effusions of brotherly affection till she should withdraw.

The stranger whose countenance could boast no great expression, kept her eyes intently fixed on him, and seemed so anxious to discover his name, by endeavouring to recollect his features, that, for a while, she addressed not a word to the nuns, whom she was just come to see.

Herman, extremely agitated, was equally silent.

“ I perceive you can dispense with my
“ presence,” said the lady at last to the
nuns, at the same time rising from her
chair. “ The knight, I presume, is not
“ come merely to look at you : or are you
“ such adepts in the language of the eyes,
“ that you can understand what he would
“ say, without its being necessary for him
“ to open his mouth ? ”

“ We

"We have not the honour of knowing the gentleman," answered Agnes, "though there is certainly something in his features"

"That very much pleases you:" added the lady with a sneer. "A pretty frank confession for a couple of nuns, I must own."

"I appeal to yourself, sir knight," said Agnes, in a tone of some displeasure. "Say, are you at all known to us?"

"Agnes and Petronilla then do not know me? And have they no presentiment?" replied Herman, with a smile of tenderness.

"Come, explain yourselves, young ladies," said the visitor, who, by degrees, as she fancied she recollected Herman, viewed him with eyes still more unfavourable: "You ought to have some presentiment; the knight himself acknowledges it."

"Ah! if suspicions, if presentiments were to determine," answered Petronilla, "it is so long since I heard from my brother Herman, I should say you came from him."

"My brother, indeed!" cried the lady with petulance. "Are you then the only sister of the little urchin? But your brothers and sisters will have no great objection

“ objection to relinquish to you the honour.”

“ And who is this little urchin of whom you speak ?” Asked the knight, giving her a look of contempt.

“ Pray, sir, pardon her !” said the gentle Agnes. “ We frequently give this appellation to those whom we have seen when children. I suspect that you are the friend of our Herman ; and I trust you will not be offended at what has been said. The lady is

“ None of your excuses, Miss,” said the lady, interrupting her : “ None of your excuses for me. I shall not so far degrade myself as to make any either to Herman or any of his friends. And as to pardon it is he I think who stands most in need of that. His scandalous return to the world, and the total forgetfulness of his relations and benefactors, are not yet effaced from our memory : nor is the life he has since led at all calculated to remove these unfavourable impressions.”

“ Fie, Catherine !” said Petronilla in a suppliant rather than a reproving tone. “ What harm has Herman done to you that you should thus speak ill of him before a stranger ?”

“ Before a stranger ! Did you not say, that you supposed him to be the friend
“ and

“ and envoy of your brother? Be this
“ however as it may, every body knows
“ his shameful adventures with the paltry
“ little Munster, who, God knows how, is
“ on a sudden become a princess; the share
“ he had in the murder of the duke of
“ Brunswic; and a variety of other crimes
“ that have occasioned him to be con-
“ demned by the secret tribunal, and that
“ ought for ever to alienate the heart of
“ his relations.” Saying this, she rose,
and flounced out of the parlour, while
Herman, with arms folded, looked at her
with horror.

“ May I ask,” said Herman, when she
was gone, “ who this fury is?”

“ Our sister, Catherine of Senden,” re-
plied Petronilla with a sigh.

“ Your sister! Your sister! Good Hea-
“ vens can it be! And if yours, conse-
“ quently mine! Alas, alas!”

“ Who then are you?” cried Agnes,
advancing nearer the grate in order to ob-
serve him more distinctly.

“ O Herman, Herman!” exclaimed Pe-
tronilla, clasping her hands. “ Yes it is
“ indeed our Herman! My heart did not
“ deceive me.”

“ My brother! My good angel! Our
“ only comfort under all our afflictions!”
said Agnes weeping. “ Ah! why cannot
“ I fold thee in my arms!”

The

The rapture of these kind and virtuous souls at sight of a brother whom they fondly loved, and from whom they had so long been separated, is not to be described, and for a while it bereft Herman of the power of speech. . . . At length their joy becoming more calm, he again spoke of her who had made on him so unfavourable an impression, who had so furiously reviled, and strove with so much malice to dishonour him. He was astonished that such a woman could be his sister, and the nuns were obliged to give him a thousand different proofs before they could convince him.

“ Good God ! ” cried he, “ and are
“ the rest of the family like her ? If so, I
“ will never make myself known to any
“ but yourselves.”

“ Judge not so hastily,” said the good Agnes. “ Catherine is unhappy. Misfortune frequently renders us unjust, and
“ we ought to make allowance for those
“ who are the butt of its shafts, whatever
“ reason we may have to complain of
“ them.”

This reflection softened Herman. He asked farther questions. “ You know,”
“ said Petronilla, “ that she was preparing
“ for a religious life when we took the
“ veil ; but she preferred an indifferent
“ match, and now suffers from the po-
“ verty

“ verty and neglect of her husband and
“ the reproaches of her elder brothers
“ and sisters, particularly the abbess of
“ Marienhagen. Ill treated, as she con-
“ ceives, by them, she is disposed to take
“ her revenge on others: but she would
“ probably not have displayed her ill-
“ humour in the manner she has just done,
“ had not her dissatisfaction been excited
“ the moment before you came in by a
“ conversation respecting you.”

“ Respecting me ?”

“ Yes, respecting you, my dear brother.
“ But, Heavens ! can it be true ? Is it pos-
“ sible that you are pursued by the secret
“ tribunal ?”

“ Be not uneasy, my dear sister, on that
“ account. Supposing it true, God is the
“ safeguard and protector of innocence.”

The nuns began to weep, and it was difficult for Herman so far to tranquillize their feelings as to obtain from them the information he wanted.

“ Picture to yourself our despair when
“ we heard the dreadful intelligence. Ag-
“ nes expressed a wish, that you might take
“ refuge in your own country ; a wish in
“ which I sincerely joined, hoping that you
“ would find an asylum with our brother
“ Bernard, or at least assistance to enable
“ you to seek your safety elsewhere, for we
“ had no doubt of your poverty. ‘ And
“ where,’

“where,” added I, “can he apply with
“greater confidence than to the head of
“his family, his own brother, who ought
“to act the part of a father to him?” Ca-
“tharine at this became enraged. She has
“a numerous family, and she conceived
“that whatever Bernard might give you
“would be taken from her children, who,
“she hopes will one-day inherit the whole
“of his fortune.”

Herman directed towards his sisters a look, that expressed his gratitude, and the regret he felt at not being able to testify it as he could wish. The sorrow he displayed in his countenance was misinterpreted. “Do not afflict yourself, my dear brother,” said Agnes with emotion, holding out to him her hand. “If Bernard refuses, we
“will assist you ourselves; we are not so
“poor as you may imagine; all the pre-
“sents we have received from you are still
“in our possession; and will perhaps
“prove sufficient. But ah! whither will
“you go? Where can you be safe from
“your avengers? Petronilla, do you ad-
“vise him; you are generally fertile in
“expedients: but be quick: a moment’s
“delay may be ruinous.”

Herman had no means of quieting the apprehensions of his sisters, but by a relation of his adventures, from which they saw that the danger, at least as he flattered himself

himself, was not so imminent as they had been told, that he had wherewith to provide for his support, and that discretion was all that was necessary to his safety.

Our party was in no haste to separate. The rules of the convent were not very rigid, and our nuns besides were so extremely beloved that they might remain in the parlour as long as they pleased. The conversation, however, which had lasted some hours, was at length interrupted by the arrival of the abbess of Marienhagen, who came to visit her sisters and acquaint them with the reports that were spread concerning Herman.

She recollected him the moment she entered, and was as readily recollected by him. Nuns, they say, have a quicker sight and stronger memory than your profane worldlings. It was impossible for our knight to conceal himself from the abbess: nor did it become him, he thought, to show distrust of a sister whom, in his infancy, he had been taught to revere as a mother.

Ursula embraced him. Her kiss was cold, yet was it preferable to the conduct of madam Senden. She presently related, in pious and measured phrases, nearly the same things which Catherine had mentioned with acrimony and passion. He perceived that at bottom neither of them loved him: but while the rage of madam Senden
excited

excited his indignation, the behaviour of the abbess was entitled to some respect, and he resolved to relate to her his adventures, in order to disprove the injurious reports propagated concerning him.

Urfula, having heard his story, shrugged up her shoulders, and expressed a hope that it might be true: but he had better, she said, have sought his safety in some other country, as it was impossible to find an asylum among his relations; and that the utmost they could do for him was to favour his flight.

Sentiments so unnatural revolted the mind of Herman. He was silent and fell into a profound reverie. Meanwhile Petronilla related to the abbess the discourse of Catherine, which kindled the holy matron into a flame.

"I penetrate her designs," cried Urfula. "The moment she is sure of the arrival of Herman, she will exert herself to prevent the lord of Unna," [such was the respectful title under which Bernard was always spoken of by his sisters] "from having an interview with him, lest he should be induced to do something for his distressed brother. But she shall not succeed in her plan: and though flight is certainly the most advisable step for Herman, yet I see no reason why he may not stay a few days, and be introduced to
" his

“ his relations, as he has certainly as much
“ right to the assistance of his brother as
“ the selfish Catherine.”

Herman trembled at the enmity Ursula displayed for her sister, though at the same time she was testifying her goodness towards him. He assured her that he was not come to ask assistance, or to remain many days, losing the time which was of importance to his flight ; that he wished not to give umbrage to any one by his presence ; and that he had undertaken this journey by the advice of the duke of Austria, who had led him to hope that the old count of Unna, chief of the secret tribunal in those parts, could effect a farther investigation of his unhappy affair, and procure him an opportunity of proving his innocence.

The name of the count of Unna was to the abbess of Marienhagen as an electrical shock. She vowed that she would never suffer a brother whom she had brought up and always loved as her own child, to claim the protection of the declared enemy of her family. All their ancient feuds, which Herman had been obliged so often to hear repeated as to be sick with disgust, were now recited anew. She told him how the old count of Unna had, both publicly and privately, persecuted the lords of Unna on account of the affair of Wirtemberg ;

berg ; how he had seized their property, and obliged the greater part of them, herself among the rest, to embrace a religious life from want of means to support with proper dignity the rank to which they were born ; how he continued still to hate and despise them to such a degree, that he was resolved as he had no children, rather than leave to them his earldom of Unna, with its domains, to bequeath them to some foreign house, or suffer them to devolve on the emperor.

Herman was fatiated with the verbose prolixity of this narration. He attempted to reply, but the abbess would not listen to him, and made him consent to be introduced the next day to his elder brother, who resided at Plettenburg.

It grew late, and Herman was obliged to quit the sisters he loved, together with her towards whom he felt no partiality. At his departure Ursula embraced him more tenderly than at first, and she obtained permission for the door of the parlour to be opened that Agnes and Petronilla might have the same pleasure : marks of benevolence that would have touched the susceptible heart of our chevalier, had he not been aware that the desire of giving pain to others was their true motive.

CHAPTER XL

HOW much must Herman have regretted the agreeable society of the duke of Austria, the interesting Ida, and the worthy Munster, on comparing it with that of some of his relations, whose way of thinking was to him equally new and disgusting. It is true, that it fell short of the extreme depravity he had observed in a few other persons, as Kunzman, and the countess of Cyly, for instance: but the meanness of their souls inspired him with a certain antipathy, which never fails to be accompanied with contempt; though the feeling was in a manner softened by his reflecting on the amiable nuns of Uberwasser. Indeed his desire of seeing these once more, had greater weight in prolonging his stay, than the promise he had made to the abbess of Marienhagen: for he feared he might find other disagreeable originals in his family, and should at last be obliged to suspect his own goodness, the branches of the tree from which he descended being so corrupt.

The so much dreaded day at length arrived, and he set off for Marienhagen, where he had promised to call for his sister, the abbess. With her he found the whole family

gaily assembled, except the important personage to whom he was to be introduced. Agnes and Petronilla ran with open arms to meet him. The phlegmatic canons of Munster, coldly held out to him her hand, and madam Senden, by the positive order of the devout Ursula, stammered her excuses. Herman had long before pardoned her, and he was sorry he had been offended with her for a single moment; the deep humiliation impressed on her countenance gave him pain, and he embraced her with warmth, calling her by the tender name of sister.

By her side was her husband, Ulric of Senden, whose figure was one of those, which nature rarely forms, displaying that model of human beauty in its utmost perfection, which the Grecian artist imagined for his Apollo, while the expression of his features bespoke a mind not at all inferior. He embraced our knight with dignity; and Herman, won, as is usual with young persons, by the impression of external charms, pressed him with ardour to his bosom. He was surprized at finding a dysnomony of this description, in a circle of persons, the majority of whom had little to boast in point of beauty, and still more, that such a man should be the husband of Catherine, and he looked at the two nuns to express to them his astonishment. They smiled,

F 2

and

and whispered to him to prepare himself to see, in another relation, a person far surpassing all his imagination could conceive.

At length the cavalcade set out for Plettenburg. Ulric appeared as much dissatisfied as Herman, with the attention so numerous a company would excite, and had a serious conversation with the abbess on the subject, to whom he observed, that such parade was by no means prudent, considering the situation of the young stranger. But his remonstrances were useless. No one would dare to talk openly of the danger of Herman, now that the devout abbess of Marienhagen treated him with kindness, and had taken him under her protection; and the reports of his misfortune, were to be blotted from remembrance, the moment she issued the injunction, though before, no one had propagated it with so much imprudence as herself, and Catherine, whom she hated, though so strongly resembling her.

Herman had resided at the courts of the first princes of his time; he had been in the service of an emperor, and of a king of Hungary; at Nuremberg he had been familiar with personages who had pretensions to the first throne in the world; yet had he no where witnessed that ostentatious display of grandeur, which obtruded themselves

selves on the eye, at the castle of a mere country gentleman.

Bernard must surely have thought, that the honour of being chief of the younger branch of the house of Unna, was the most exalted to which human vanity could aspire, or he could never have endured the ridiculous pomp that surrounded him; could never have been pleased with the humble homage of his relations and domestics; could never have treated, with such haughtiness, all who approached him.

The court of Plettenburg, as Bernard's residence was then styled, was certainly too splendid for a lord of Unna; but it was a splendor by which Herman, who had seen the world, was not to be dazzled, and which could not fail to excite, in a philosophic mind, the most melancholy reflections. All this magnificence was supported by the unpaid dowries of unhappy sisters, and the withheld fortunes of brothers scarcely more happy, who had sacrificed themselves, or been forcibly sacrificed, to enable the first born of the family to live in the style of a petty sovereign.

Displeasing as was to Herman the house which he entered; its master, though his brother, proved equally displeasing. The audience he obtained was by no means favourable.

favourable. He ought, if he would conform to established rules, to have bowed himself as lowly in the presence of Bernard, as before king Sigismund, or the emperor Winceslaus. This he avoided, accosting him only with the respect which he conceived due to an elder brother; but he soon perceived the dissatisfaction occasioned by this conduct, which was deemed irreverent.

The eyes of Herman were soon attracted from this haughty gentleman, to a young woman seated by his side, who, as soon as the abbess announced the name of the chevalier, rose with inimitable grace to embrace him. It was the wife of Bernard. She was unknown to Herman, as she had not been united to the family till after his elopement.

He looked at her with astonishment. His Ida excepted, he had never beheld so perfect a beauty. Her charms were heightened by an angelic sweetness, spread over every feature of her face, and forming a perfect contrast to the stiff and formidable demeanour of her imperious spouse; as well as by a trait of melancholy, an interesting paleness, that plainly bespoke her to be unhappy, and which, to the eye of sensibility, are irresistibly attracting.

Alicia took the hand of Herman, and called him a second time her brother, and that

that in a tone so endearing that the heart of our knight was inexpressibly moved, and he could not refrain from falling at her feet.

Bernard beheld with satisfaction this mark of respect, which he supposed was paid rather to the consort of the lord of Unna, than to the beautiful Alicia. Imagining therefore that Herman did not altogether disdain the etiquette of his court, he held out his hand, with a tolerable grace, to assist him to rise. That of his charming sister-in-law Herman presumed to kiss, and having seated himself in a chair by her side, which was negligently offered him by Bernard, he was honoured with a few questions, which he took care to answer so as not to offend the pride of his brother.

Shortly after, the lord of Unna being engaged in a private conversation with his sister, the abbess, Alicia made a sign to the nuns of Uberwasser, her intimate and bosom friends, to approach in order to converse with Herman.

“Well, my dear brother,” said Petronilla with a smile, “is our prediction verified?”

“Oh!” replied Herman, “I am astonished, enchanted! I could fancy myself in the company of my beloved Ida,
and

“and I esteem myself happy in having so lovely a sister.”

Alicia was about to make a civil reply to this compliment, but, having cast her eye on Ulric of Senden, who was leaning against a pillar opposite to her, and who seemed as in a trance with the pleasure of beholding her, she blushed, and was silent.

The mind of Herman was too busily occupied to notice her embarrassment. Every thing surprized him; and a whole day spent in his brother's house served only to convince him that he was far from being acquainted with the history of all the individuals of his family.

That of Ulric of Senden he was least able to decipher. His figure, his manner, were extremely prepossessing; yet, in his behaviour to Herman, was there something singularly forbidding. Grave and cold when he talked to him; and, at the same time, when he spoke of him to a third person, his ardent admirer. All the efforts of our young chevalier to induce Ulric to unite himself to him by the ties of friendship were vain; on the contrary he appeared to shun every opportunity of entering into private conversation with Herman, and smiled on him only when he saw him in the midst of a numerous circle. His behaviour to madam Unna was equally strange. If he found himself obliged

obliged to speak to her, it was in a tone of indifference, bordering on contempt; yet were his eyes, when he thought himself unobserved, incessantly fixed on her. He carefully avoided meeting her, yet could not refrain from watching her every motion, listening to her every word.

Having observed all this, it appeared by no means extraordinary to Herman, that so singular a character should express no great tenderness to Catherine; but he was at a loss to conceive how she could have become his wife. To clear his doubts he had recourse to the nuns, his sisters; who shrugged their shoulders, and assured him that they were not sufficiently acquainted with the affair to give him the information he wished.

Madam Unna displayed a great predilection for her new brother-in-law. He and the two sisters, Agnes and Petronilla, formed her select society. Never did she so much strive to engage him to herself as when she perceived him making attempts to gain the friendship of Ulric, who could with difficulty preserve the cool air he assumed towards him. "Why," said she to him one day, "are you always courting the friendship of that singular being? I must insist on your promising me never to contract any intimacy with him: he is honest enough to reject your overtures, and I dare affirm he has reasons for it."

Herman seized this opportunity of putting some questions to Alicia respecting Ulric; but, instead of answering them, she blushed, and endeavoured to give another turn to the conversation.

CHAPTER XII.

THE different members of the family of Unna remained at the castle of Plattenburg for some days. Bernard seemed insensibly to take a liking to Herman. The young chevalier could relate so many anecdotes of kings and emperors, of dukes and princes, that the haughty lord began to feel some veneration for him, and to excuse his not having humbled himself more before the head of his house; he was also inwardly flattered by the profound respect paid by Herman to the beautiful Alicia.

At length the abbess of Marienhagen, and the nuns of Uberwasser were obliged to return to their respective convents. The unwieldy canoness of Munster also quitted the castle, so that of Bernard's guests none remained

remained but Herman and the family of Senden.

Catherine availed herself of the absence of the abbess, her mortal enemy, to show herself to the brother, whom at first she had so highly offended, in a more favourable point of view. She perceived that his endeavours to obtain the friendship of Bernard were perfectly disinterested; some considerable presents which he made her children, proved also that he neither sought nor needed his assistance; and this was sufficient to inspire her with regret for having given him so ill a reception. She made him therefore many advances, and one day said, that she should never think he had forgiven her, unless he would promise to accompany her home, and thus afford her an opportunity of repairing the injury.

Herman had nothing so much at heart as to obtain an audience of the old count of Unna, who he had heard was returned. It was the sole business that had brought him into this country; the visits he had paid his family were merely casual, and had already occupied more time than was prudent in his situation. He would therefore unquestionably have refused madam Senden's request, in which her husband had no part, had he not feared that she might think he still harboured resentment in his breast.

breast for the manner in which she had treated him. He accordingly consented, a step which occasioned madam Unna, who was present, a degree of uneasiness which she could with difficulty conceal.

“ Is then every entreaty I have made you, not to contract an intimacy with Ulric of Senden, useless ?” said she to him the moment they were alone.

“ It is not Ulric that I am going to visit ; it is my sister.”

“ But when you are in his house, will you be able to prevent a certain degree of familiarity from taking place between you ?”

“ And would not the friendship of such a man be a happiness to me ?”

“ I tell you no, Herman, no. You must never be alone with me for a single moment ; if you are, some calamity will befall you.”

“ I do not comprehend you, madam. Would you have me entertain suspicions injurious to the honour of Ulric ?”

“ Certainly not. Ulric may be a man of the nicest honour ; but I dare not be more explicit. . . . Believe me, Herman, the most prudent step you can take is to repair with all speed to the old count of Unna, to finish your business with him, and then to depart.”

“ I have

“ I have nothing, madam, nearer at heart than to see the count of Unna ; but I cannot dispense with visiting my sister ; it would be cruel to treat her with unkindness.”

“ I have no hatred to Catherine ; I pity her, and ascribe many of her faults to the unpleasantness of her situation.”

“ And yet you give me to understand, that I have something to apprehend from her which ought to deter me from entering her house.”

“ Not from her. God forbid ! not from her. I do not think her wicked enough secretly to injure you But Ulric of Senden ! Ulric !”

“ Is a worthy and virtuous character : is to our sex, what the divine Alicia is to hers !”

“ He may be virtuous, he may be worthy ; and yet have I not known him longer than you ?”

“ Certainly, certainly, you are best acquainted with him. I have observed your looks ; I have observed his also ; I have noticed things that make me wish to know more Alicia, frank and amiable Alicia ! my sister, my friend ! will you not trust me ? My advice may possibly be of service to you. Possibly, by telling me of your real sentiments of Ulric I may be induced to embrace your
“ counsel.

"counsel. Will you not then listen to my prayer? Say will you not condescend to explain yourself?"

Alicia shed a torrent of tears; but disengaging herself from Herman, who held her hands in his, she declared that she would have no farther conversation with him on the subject. "Remember, however," added she, "remember that I have warned you. You must now act as you please. I have nothing more to say."

She appeared seriously offended with our chevalier for his too urgent importunities, and would not address a single word to him during the remainder of the day, the last he was to spend at her house. Meanwhile she had yet not abandoned the hope of separating him from Ulric.

Herman persisted in his intention of accompanying his sister home, and as soon as it was known, Ulric was invited to stay a few days longer at Plettenburg.

A deadly paleness overspread the countenance of Ulric, the moment our young man informed him that he purposed to pay him a visit; but, upon receiving this invitation from Bernard and Alicia, his cheeks again resumed their wonted animation. Herman observed, for the first time, that he kissed the hand of his sister-in-law, and spoke to her with politeness. Alicia blushed, and

and cast down her eyes, while Ulric fixed on her a look of the liveliest gratitude.

“What means this change?” said Herman to himself “Am I deceived respecting these two characters? Are they less scrupulous, less delicate than I had imagined? . . . Ah! they are certainly engaged in a secret, a guilty commerce. Their stolen looks, their sudden blushes, their mutual intelligence attest that they have formerly loved, and that their love is not yet extinguished. . . . Was it for this, dissembling Alicia, thou soughtst to separate me from Ulric? No doubt, thou wert afraid I should discover thy criminal passion, and seek to avenge a brother’s injured honour. No doubt, thou wishest to retain him at Plettenburg that thou mayest tranquilly enjoy thy illicit attachment, free from the eyes of a jealous wife, and a suspicious brother-in-law.”

To Herman appearances blended so strong against Alicia, that he was astonished at the blindness of Bernard, who seemed not to remark things, that, in his opinion, must be perceived by all the world; and it was, perhaps, happy for the suspected parties that Herman was not eager to communicate to his brother his reflections.

The chevalier departed with Catherine and her children. They were handsome
and

and diverting little creatures, more resembling their father than their mother, and with them he beguiled the wearisomeness of his sister's insipid conversation.

He was every instant more convinced of the depravity of this woman's heart. Her slanderous tongue spared not an individual of her relations, whom she endeavoured to ruin in the mind of her young brother, not excepting even the innocent nuns of Uberwasser, Agnes and Petronilla. She vaunted, with great self-complacency, the dexterity with which she could discover evil in the inmost recesses of the heart, and adduced proofs of her talent that were really singular in their kind.

She had found means to procure the paper on which madam Unna had written the examination of her conscience, and Herman expected nothing less from this circumstance than a confirmation of his suspicions ; but, to his extreme surprise, he found them removed.

“ This Alicia,” said Catherine, “ a poor
“ descendant of the house of Langen, be-
“ come obnoxious to the secret tribunal,
“ has entered into our family to our sorrow.
“ But for her, Bernard would probably
“ never have thought of marrying. How-
“ ever she is faithfully attached to him,
“ and is scarcely ever from his side, which
“ renders her the plague of all the wives
“ in

“ in the neighbourhood, whose husbands
“ are continually citing her as a model.
“ She is not disagreeable in her person, as
“ you have seen ; neither has she wanted
“ admirers ; and for a while I could not
“ help thinking that she indemnified her-
“ self in private for the strict decorum she
“ affected in public : but having narrowly
“ watched her for some years, I am at
“ length convinced that she is a woman
“ devoid both of spirit and sensibility, to
“ whom such kind of virtue costs little.”

Herman looked at Catherine with eyes of astonishment. and would have asked, but knew not how, the reason of the understanding he observed between Alicia and Ulric.

“ Is she friendly to you and your husband ?” said he at length with an affectation of indifference.

“ To me she is certainly friendly. You see I have a good opinion of her ; consequently I merit her attachment. Besides, she loves my children, and often makes them presents. But for my husband she appears to entertain the most profound contempt. Of this, at least, I am certain, that a civil word has never passed between them till to-day. You were witness to the invitation she gave him : it astonished me, for, to say the truth, he cares as little for her, as she
“ for

“ for him. He always avoids her, and I
“ do not recollect, that, since our marriage, he has three times set his foot with-
“ in the doors of Plettenburg castle.”

Herman could not avoid shaking his head, and seeking, by a number of adroit questions, to discover some traces of what he suspected. He learnt, however, nothing more, and with pleasure found himself deceived in the opinion he had formed of Ulric and Alicia. What better proof indeed could he have had of their innocence, than the testimony of Catherine? Even in the enumeration of her complaints against her husband, she said not a word that could cast on him the least suspicion of infidelity. Her griefs all centered in his discontent, and uncivil treatment of her, to which the good lady herself might have given sufficient occasion, by the malignancy of her disposition, of which she had just exhibited no very equivocal proofs.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XIII.

HERMAN had already so amply enjoyed the conversation of his benevolent sisters on the road, that he was little desirous of renewing it, during his short abode at her house, and preferred the innocent prattle of her children, who had easily gained his affection. He talked to them continually of their father, and what they said, exhibited him in so favourable a point of view, that all his suspicions vanished, and were succeeded by a new desire of having him for a friend. To this desire was joined, that of knowing the motive of Alicia's mysterious advice. He determined, therefore, to have a private interview with him, and to triumph over the efforts of his brother-in-law to avoid him.

“ My husband,” says Catherine, “ seems
“ resolved not to return till his presence
“ shall be necessary to dissipate the solitude
“ in which I live. To speak frankly, I
“ scarcely feel the absence of an ill-natured
“ spouse, in the company of so agreeable
“ a brother. Let him stay, therefore, at
“ Plettenburg, and strengthen our intimacy
“ with Bernard and his wife, which
“ sooner

“ sooner or later, may be of advantage to us.” She then shewed Herman a letter she had just received from Ulric, in which he was desired to inform him of the departure of her brother, the instant it took place, as he should then quit Plettenburg, and return home.

Herman resolved to be gone the next day. He accordingly took leave of his sister and her children, after having given the latter proofs of his generosity, that deprived him of almost all he possessed. He knew the road to Unna to be that by which Ulric must return, and he waited for him a whole day in the forest through which he was to pass. The delay shewed, that Ulric took every possible precaution not to meet, nor to see him again.

“ Heavens!” cried Herman, “ what can be the cause of this insuperable aversion? At Plettenburg, I read in his eyes the hatred he bore me. The coldness of his manner, and the reserve of his conversation, convinced me I was not mistaken. Not once could I prevail upon him to take a walk with me. He seemed devoured with chagrin whenever at-table, or in company, I was accidentally seated by his side. Surely, some fearful mystery lurks beneath all this. I must fathom it. I must give this man, for I love him, a better

“ better opinion of me, though it cost me
“ my life. Perhaps my misfortune has
“ instilled suspicions into my mind. Per-
“ haps he thinks me guilty of the crime
“ of which I am accused. Yes, yes, I
“ will see him, I will gain his affection,
“ by proving to him my innocence. The
“ good opinion of the whole world would
“ be nothing to me, while Ulric should
“ think me capable of murder.

You, who have been sometimes drawn by an irresistible impulse towards a soul in unison with your own, without being able to comprehend the charms that attracted you: you, whose efforts to obtain the good-will of him whom you have chosen among a thousand, have increased in proportion as the loved object seemed to reject your advances; you alone can judge of the inclination felt by our chevalier for Ulric of Senden. The frigid heart which never experienced this sentiment, would in vain attempt to form an idea of it.

As evening approached, the anxiety of Herman increased. The longer he vainly waited for him whom he wished to see, the more ardent became his desire. Meanwhile his mind was disturbed; a thousand melancholy presages crowded to his thoughts; his heart bad him remain, while a secret voice whispered to him to fly.

“ But

"But why should I fly?" said he to himself; and he remained.

The moon arose. Our hero had advanced so far to meet Senden, that he could perceive, from a hill he had ascended, the turrets of the castle of Plettenburg. He beheld around him nothing but deserts. The stillness of the night, was interrupted by no other sound, than the monotonous murmuring of a brook.

The night was far spent, and the moon was hastening to the western horizon, when the sound of horses feet were heard in a narrow valley. They drew so near, that Herman could distinguish the voice of Ulric, directing his servants to go on before to Senden house, and bring him word, whether the young knight were yet gone. He then alighted, and seated himself at the foot of a tree. Herman, who watched his motions, immediately presented himself, and said to him: "Why dost thou shun me? What has Herman done, that it seems poison to thee, to breathe the same air with him?"

"God of Heaven!" exclaimed Ulric, wrapping himself in his cloak, "what a misfortune! Waking or dreaming he is everywhere present to my sight; and now a voice within me tells me that I must kill him."

"That

“That thou must kill me!” said Herman, folding him in his arms: “That thou must assassinate thy brother! What, then, what have I done?”

“Begone, villain!” replied Ulric disengaging himself from his embrace. “Who art thou? Is it not a vision that I see? Speak, who art thou?”

“Thy brother, Herman of Unna, who asks thy friendship or death. To be despised, to be rejected by thee, is more than he can support.”

“Herman? Herman of Unna? Fly, fly! I am thy murderer Yet no, fly not. It is forbidden me to give thee such advice; still less can I suffer thee to execute it. Are we not alone? . . . No, we are not God be praised! see, where come thy deliverers!”

Herman looked, and saw nothing They are the shadows of the trees, my brother. But I need no deliverer when thou art with me. O Ulric! Thou art ill, very ill! Thy heart is distressed! . . . I feared it was hatred that kept thee from me; but it was melancholy Heaven be praised! Thy melancholy will be dispelled, thy sufferings relieved, and thou wilt then love thy brother!”

“Love thee! Can I love thee more than I do? O Herman! My heart is
“with

"with thee, and yet must I assassinate thee."

"Why?" cried Herman, whom Ulric for a moment closely pressed in his arms, and then as rudely repulsed: "Why assassinate me? What is my crime?"

"Thou must die," replied Senden drawing his sabre: "Thou art the murderer of duke Frederic."

"I swear, by him, to whom all things are known, that I am not."

"The charge has been made, the witnesses have deposed, and the judges have pronounced thy condemnation. Thou art, thou must be the murderer of the duke. Thousands of secret executioners burn with the desire of shedding thy blood: but, O Heavens! Fate has decreed that the task shall devolve on thy unfortunate brother. I have bound myself by an oath, an oath the most terrible, not to spare those whom the secret tribunal shall condemn This then to thy heart This to my own!" They staggered; they fell side by side. "Oh my brother," said Herman embracing Ulric, "the thread of my life is at an end. Yet I will be thine, I will ever be thine, in those realms above, the abode of peace and everlasting friendship!"

CHAPTER XIV.

DAY had begun to make its appearance, and some neighbouring peasants were repairing to their labours, when, arriving at the clump of oaks, near the fall of the brook, they saw two seemingly human figures, whose difficult respiration, sounding in the throat, announced their dissolution at hand. On a nearer examination they found them to be two young men closely embracing, and each pierced with a sword. As they still breathed, the honest peasants instantly resolved to convey them to the castle of madam Unna, who had frequently by her care saved the lives of the sick and wounded, and who, they thought, would certainly not refuse her aid to these unfortunate strangers.

Alicia had detained Senden at Plettenburg as long as she had been able. He yielded the more readily to her solicitations, as he had the same motives for remaining as she for keeping him there. They had not owned this to each other, as they carefully avoided meeting in private, but they guessed each others thoughts, and felt themselves mutually obliged.

Bernard, solely occupied with the contemplation of his own grandeur, saw nothing in this but the honour received by Ulric in residing five days at his court, and would have had no objection to his remaining there as many more, if Alicia, to whom he was very condescending, because she bore the name of Unna, had desired it.

Ulric on his side had reasons to quit the lovely Alicia as soon as possible, and when Catherine informed him that Herman would depart the Monday after the nativity of the Virgin, he felt the same pleasure as a prisoner emancipated from his chains.

Madam Unna could not refrain from tears when Senden took leave. She recollected the past, thought of Herman, and trembled. She requested him to return home by way of Ahaus; a request at which Bernard smiled, as it was at least more than a mile about; but Ulric readily complied, fully comprehending the motive of Alicia.

The waters being high had rendered the road by Ahaus impassable. He was therefore obliged to return and take the usual way. He asked his servants what day of the week it was. They replied that, as it was past midnight, the day just begun might be called Wednesday. "Monday
and

and Wednesday," said Ulric to himself, and he proceeded cheerfully.

Alicia presaged some misfortune. At supper she was melancholy; during the night she was restless. As sleep forsook her eyes, she rose, went to the balcony, and looked anxiously round as far as the light of the moon would permit her. The dawn still found her there. She endeavoured to dissipate the fatal presentiments that haunted her mind. She addressed to Heaven her wonted orisons; she prayed that a day might not pass without affording her an opportunity of doing good. She knew by experience that the practice of virtue was the best means of restoring tranquillity to an afflicted heart.

This duty fulfilled, she looked towards the valley, which the purple beams of morn had yet scarcely enlightened, and she discovered a company of men moving slowly towards the castle. One of them advanced before the rest and knocked at the gate.

"What misfortune has happened? What are you bringing hither?" Cried Alicia from the balcony.

"Ah, noble lady!" replied the peasant who knew her voice: "is it you? What a lucky omen! we bring you two unfortunate beings, whom we found lying on yonder hill covered with blood."

“ They still breathe. We have bound
“ up their wounds as well as we were
“ able; the rest we must leave to you;
“ God always gives a blessing to your cha-
“ ritable deeds.”

Alicia staid not to hear all he said, but ran to open the door herself, and in her way she awoke some of the servants who slept in the anti-chamber, that they might get ready the necessary apparatus for the wounded strangers.

The domestics of this benevolent female had long known, from experience, how to act on such occasions. Alicia, before she married, had been the friend, the comforter, the nurse of the sick, and she thought herself happy in having a husband who allowed her full liberty in the exercise of her benevolent disposition.

In those days it was accounted honourable to do good, and the pride of Bernard was not a little flattered when his wife was styled a second Elizabeth; a saint whose glory, in his eyes, was greatly enhanced by her being descended from a royal house.

It was not from such paltry motives that Alicia was prompted to benevolence; but she was prudent enough to avail herself of her husband's weakness and vanity, that she might pursue unrestrained her own inclinations.

Having

Having opened the gate, she went to meet the wounded, to see that they were carried gently and with care. Approaching she beheld the face of Ulric covered with the shades of death, Herman scarcely breathing, and she felt as devoid of life as either of them.

Her servants flew to her assistance, and she was conveyed, together with her two dying friends, to the castle. At length she opened her eyes, and seeing a crowd about her, she made a sign for all who were not absolutely necessary to leave her in order to assist Ulric and Herman. Her fears for these two unfortunate beings revived her strength, and she was soon able to repair to their chamber to examine their situation and the treatment it required.

The steward, an expert surgeon, had already so far recovered Herman that he could open his eyes, and when his sister-in-law appeared he was able to call her by her name and convey her hand to his lips. Ulric of Senden was still in a swoon. A feeble pulsation of the heart was all that announced him alive. His wound was much deeper than Herman's. Against Herman he had lifted his sword with regret; against himself his arm had exerted all its strength.

By the indefatigable cares of Alicia, and the skill of her servants Senden and Herman

man were at length both extricated from their danger : but to the latter she was more particularly attentive, as Catherine had been sent for to superintend her husband. Herman's regard for his charming sister-in-law, and the confidence she reposed in him, increased every day from the habitude of seeing each other, and soon there was established between them as great an intimacy, as we have observed, in the preceding volume, to have subsisted between duke Albert of Austria and the lovely Ida. There was this difference however ; Herman could not be suspected of entertaining for Alicia sentiments warmer than those of friendship, whereas many of my readers may perhaps have judged otherwise respecting the feelings of Albert.

A few weeks after their arrival at Plettenburg, Herman was able to sit up ; and Ulric was sufficiently recovered to send Catherine home to prepare for his return. Herman had a thousand questions to ask respecting Ulric, and madam Unna was more inclined to answer them than formerly. She now knew enough of her brother-in-law to venture to open to him her heart. The pains she had taken on his account had rendered him more dear to her. She confessed the history of Senden to be so interwoven with hers, that
it

it was impossible for her to relate what Herman was desirous of knowing, without making him the confident of her own adventures.

Hitherto Alicia had not been able to gratify the impatient curiosity of Herman, because her husband scarcely ever quitted the chamber of the convalescent, with whose conversation he was much entertained. At length however Bernard thought proper to visit Engelrading, where the lords of Ravensberg and Meerveldt gave a tournament, and this first leisure moment was employed as will be seen in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

“**H**OW shall I relate to you,” said Alicia, “events that will open all the ancient wounds of my heart, and perhaps represent me to your eyes in an unfavourable light! You will forgive the weakness of a woman, if the remembrance of what is past draw from her some tears. I call Heaven to witness, that Ulric is no longer so dear to me as
“ he

“ he was : yet I own that I cannot see him
“ without some degree of emotion. At
“ sight of him I experience a sensation
“ which I am unable to define. It is not
“ the remnant of a love subdued ; it is a
“ mixture of dread, fear, and compassi-
“ on . . . Whatever it be, you shall hear,
“ and judge.

“ Without doubt my sister-in-law, Ca-
“ therine, has informed you, that I am of
“ the family of Langen, pursued for some
“ years by the secret tribunal. My fa-
“ ther's disputes with the bishop of Osn-
“ bruck relate not to my narrative. He
“ fell a victim to the bishop's rancour ;
“ as did my mother, who died of grief in
“ the flower of her age, in consequence of
“ which I became the ward of my elder
“ brother.

“ Conrad loved me ; he took as much
“ care of me as a father could have done ;
“ and his confidence in me was so great,
“ that he left me perfectly mistress of my
“ actions. In his castle I was as I am
“ here : I was treated not as his ward,
“ but as the mistress of the house.

“ My brother was frequently absent
“ from home for months together, God
“ knows why. I fear he was then en-
“ gaged in what brought on him the per-
“ secution he now suffers. His conduct
“ was frequently rash and inconsiderate ;

“ and

“ and his enemies represented it in colours
 “ that made it appear still more repre-
 “ hensible. I considered it as a duty in-
 “ cumbent on me to repair by prayers and
 “ good deeds at home the evil Conrad did
 “ abroad, and thus to divert the divine
 “ vengeance from our house, which had
 “ already experienced so many misfor-
 “ tunes. My actions might be good and
 “ laudable in themselves; the poor, the
 “ sick, the aged, found shelter and relief
 “ at the castle of Langen; but I carried
 “ my benevolence too far, I applied it not
 “ with sufficient discretion, and I was pu-
 “ nished by the loss of my peace.

“ Ulrich of Senden having been wounded
 “ in a single combat, at a small distance
 “ from the castle, his servants brought
 “ him to us, and begged assistance for
 “ their master. A strict regard to deco-
 “ rum, perhaps, would have required me
 “ to refuse my aid to a handsome young
 “ knight, and to send him to the monks
 “ of a neighbouring convent, who also did
 “ many charitable acts. But my sensibi-
 “ lity suffered me to think of nothing but
 “ the danger of the wounded young man.
 “ Senden was consequently taken into our
 “ house: I attended him as if he had been
 “ a brother; he recovered; and
 “ compassion on the one hand, and grati-
 “ tude on the other, gave birth to friend-

" ship, which was not long growing up to
" love.

" Happy in each others affection, hope
" and innocence never quitted us. But,

" O celestial days, whither are you flown?

" Ulric staid not long at the castle after

" his cure. His duty and decorum called

" him elsewhere. We had seen enough

" of each other to be sensible that we

" loved, and to imagine that we should

" love for ever. We exchanged mutual

" vows. It was necessary, that Senden

" should make a few more campaigns, to

" acquire glory and honours; and I pur-

" posed to remain at the head of my bro-

" ther's household, till Beatrice of Meer-

" veldt should assume the charge. It was

" agreed, that Ulric should then demand

" me in marriage. I could not suppose

" Conrad would refuse me to the man

" whom my heart should prefer. I

" thought on the contrary, that his affec-

" tion for me would induce him to contri-

" bute every thing he could to our union,

" my happiness being too dear to him,

" my will too sacred, for him to oppose

" my inclinations. Besides, he was rich,

" and could bestow on me a portion suffici-

" cient to compensate the scanty fortune of

" Ulric.

" Winter arrived. The expeditions of

" the knights were less frequent. My

" brother returned to his castle. A num-

" be

“ her of waggons laden with booty fol-
“ lowed him ; and I could not help asking,
“ whether it were honestly acquired. An
“ austere look, the first I believe he ever
“ gave me, preceded his answer. ‘ Wo-
“ men,’ said he, ‘ know nothing of the
“ laws of war, or the privileges of nobi-
“ lity : it becomes them, therefore, on
“ such subjects, to be silent.’

“ I was silent, and had soon more occa-
“ sions than one to accustom myself to it.
“ During the war Conrad never quitted his
“ castle, except that he went sometimes
“ to hunt in the neighbouring forest. His
“ companions in arms visited him fre-
“ quently. They were faces I had never
“ seen, the rugged features of which con-
“ fined me to the solitude of my chamber.
“ Their noisy revelry disturbed my tran-
“ quillity by day, and my sleep by night.
“ I ardently wished to be no longer wit-
“ ness to this irregular life ; and I waited
“ with impatience the return of the sea-
“ son when the knights would again take
“ the field. Still more eagerly did I look
“ for the moment, when Ulric should
“ come to seek his betrothed love, the
“ good Ulric, in whose peaceful habita-
“ tion I hoped to spend days that might
“ be envied.

“ Conrad, who scrupled not to profane
“ the eyes of our festivals by his de-
“ bauchery,

“bauchery, was engaged, on the eve of
“Epiphany in a drinking party, consisting
“of the most dissolute young men of the
“country. I, who considered my charms
“as sacred to Ulric—yes, Herman, I
“could then boast some charms—and who
“chose not to expose them to the view of
“drunkards, was absent on this occasion.
“After taking care that the guests should
“want nothing, I retired with my women
“to the balcony which looks towards the
“forest, that I might be out of the reach
“of the frightful clamour, with which
“the castle resounded, and enjoy the
“calm of a fine winter evening. Nature
“ever appeared to me charming even in
“her undress. The light of the stars was
“reflected by the surrounding snow. My
“women shivered with cold, and I dis-
“missed them to their beds: for my part,
“love and the thoughts of Ulric rendered
“me insensible to the rigour of the season.
“I thought on the verdant alcove where I
“had sat by his side; I thought on the
“garland of flowers crowned with which
“he was soon to lead me to the altar.

“So deeply was I absorbed in my re-
“veries, that I did not at first perceive
“two men who issued from the neigh-
“bouring wood and seemed to glide to-
“wards the castle. From the whiteness of
“the snow, they appeared to me to be in
“black.

“ black. I was not rash enough to deny the
 “ apparition of spirits, as my brother some-
 “ times did, and was afraid, therefore, for
 “ a moment, to look a second time on
 “ these terrifying objects. Curiosity, how-
 “ ever, and the possession of a good con-
 “ science, gave me courage. I rose, and
 “ looked down. The men were now so
 “ near the gate I could not see them.
 “ They gave three loud knocks, that re-
 “ verberated afar from the vaulted porch,
 “ and, immediately retiring, they disap-
 “ peared in the forest.

“ The castle was instantly alarmed. The
 “ centinel on the tower sounded his trum-
 “ pet; lights appeared on the battle-
 “ ments; the vaults under me resounded
 “ with the steps of our cavaliers, who ran to
 “ open the gate. Twenty voices spoke at
 “ once, so that I could not understand a
 “ word. Soon I heard my brother and his
 “ guests: Conrad swore, his drunken
 “ companions laughed. My heart throb-
 “ bed; I presaged some fatal event. I
 “ called up my women, and sent them to
 “ listen. They soon returned, to inform
 “ me that the company was suddenly dis-
 “ persed, and that my brother was coming
 “ to tell me himself the occasion of the
 “ alarm. My attendants wept, and I wept
 “ with them, distressed and disquieted by
 “ anxious doubts.

“ Conrad

“ Conrad made his appearance, pale as
“ death. He informed me Good
“ God! what could be more terrible
“ that he was cited before the secret tribu-
“ nal of Osnabruck, to give an account
“ of certain actions, concerning which I
“ had so often remonstrated with him. I
“ trembled, though I knew not the ex-
“ tent of our misfortune. My brother
“ spent half the night in disclosing to me
“ the horrors of that terrible tribunal, and
“ to convince me, that he could not, and
“ durst not, appear to answer the citation
“ affixed by the free judges to the gate of
“ the castle. I was of a different opinion,
“ and we parted half in anger.

“ The day following I threw myself in
“ tears at my brother’s feet, to intreat him
“ to appear before his judges. ‘ Do you
“ know what you ask?’ cried he: ‘ no-
“ thing less than my death. What at Of-
“ nabruck is called my crime, is as cer-
“ tain as if it were proved. If I were to
“ appear, therefore, you would never see
“ me again; while, on the other hand,
“ prudence, courage, and flight, may save
“ me.’

“ I leave you to guess how little such a
“ declaration was calculated to quiet my
“ apprehensions. His crime proved; his
“ death certain; flight his only resource;
“ what a melancholy situation!—My anxi-
“ ety,

"ety, and the exertions I made to find
 "some method of extricating him from
 "his danger, were near depriving me of
 "reason and of life. In the mean time,
 "my brother went in and out of his castle
 "freely, and without being disturbed. No
 "one insulted him, no one said a single
 "word to him. He soon resumed his old
 "habits, and the companions of his de-
 "baucheries re-appeared. I myself shared
 "his security, and had almost forgotten
 "the affair, when the free judges came a
 "second time to knock at the gate; and
 "thus renewed the terror with which they
 "had before inspired me.

"The fear excited in me by the ap-
 "proaching danger was this time more
 "acute; but it was not of long duration.
 "I observed that the sun shone on us as
 "bright as before, and that both nature
 "and man treated us as kindly. At length
 "the visit of these nightly disturbers, as
 "Conrad called them, seemed to me a
 "childish sport, and I thought little of it,
 "when one morning my women came to
 "tell me, that the free judges had come
 "that night for the third time, and that
 "my brother had pulled their placard from
 "the gate, torn it to pieces, and forbid-
 "den any one to mention it.

"In fact, Conrad said not a word to me
 "on this subject. Yet his anxiety and dis-
 "tress

“ tress were apparent in spite of his endeavours to conceal them. - I was so little accustomed to see him in this state, that Irea dily perceived it, and relapsed into my former fears. The consequences justified them but too well. Conrad had hitherto enjoyed his usual tranquillity, only from the silence that was observed respecting his misfortune: but when, by the flight of one of our domestics, it became known that he was pursued by the seeret tribunal, every thing assumed a different face. At the first citation, as I now learnt, the greater part of my brother's servants, who were not vassals attached to the glebe, gave notice that they should quit him, and it was only by dint of promises and presents that he retained them. But after the third citation nothing could induce them to stay. Even my women left me, one only excepted. The neighbouring ladies avoided meeting me, and Beatrice of Meerveldt, on whose faith Conrad had placed the firmest confidence, gave him to understand, that she renounced his alliance.

“ It is over with me,” said Conrad, one day, as I entered his chamber, on his sending for me: ‘ behold the fourth citation! The free judges affixed it to the gate of the castle in open day, and took
“ away

“ away with them three stones from the
“ wall. I am condemned if I do not ap-
“ pear ; and if I do, I shall never see you
“ more, till we meet in eternity. I must
“ be gone, my sister : have pity on me,
“ and do not abandon me, as others have
“ done : favour my escape, conceal it as
“ long as you can, and then fly yourself.
“ Remain with me during this terrible in-
“ terval ; remain, Alicia, or I shall be
“ forced first to pierce thy heart, and then
“ my own.”

“ “ Fly ! abandon you !” cried I, in tears.
“ Alas ! I will follow you, if you wish it :
“ I will share your fate, though . . . though
“ I partook not in your crimes.”

“ “ Ah, do not reproach me ! no : you
“ have committed no crime, but, on the
“ contrary, have often warned me of mine.
“ Yet, Alicia, do not reproach me, or
“ you will drive me to despair.”

“ The situation of my brother was de-
“ plorable. It filled me at once with fear,
“ pity, and an extreme, but painful ten-
“ derness. He seemed to think only of
“ me ; I appeared to be his only consol-
“ ation ; and he would not lose me a mo-
“ ment from his sight, accompanying me
“ wherever I was obliged to go to make
“ the necessary preparations for his jour-
“ ney.

“ They

“ They were soon completed. I packed
 “ up all the jewels he had given me, that
 “ they might be a resource to him in his
 “ need. I would keep no part of those
 “ treasures, which had perhaps cost my
 “ brother the happiness of his life.

“ Conrad, at his departure, embraced
 “ me with the tenderest affection. He la-
 “ mented his being obliged to leave me
 “ without any kind of protection. ‘ Why,’
 “ said he, ‘ was I not allowed first to place
 “ thee in the hands of a worthy husband?
 “ But thy beauty, thy virtues, thy attach-
 “ ment to a brother forsaken by all the
 “ world, of which thou hast given such
 “ striking proofs, will gain thee a thou-
 “ sand hearts, and thou mayest yet be
 “ happy.’

“ ‘ How!’ answered I, weeping, ‘ can I
 “ think of love and marriage, while you
 “ are unfortunate? Hear me, my brother.
 “ I swear by all that is most sacred, that,
 “ even if I knew the man who was one
 “ day to become my husband, I would re-
 “ fuse him my hand till I was assured of
 “ your safety, your happiness.’

“ ‘ Do not, my dear sister, do not enter
 “ into so rash an engagement. You have
 “ need of a protector. There is nothing
 “ I so ardently wish, as that you were at-
 “ tached to a man of honour, and that he
 “ was

“ was here at this moment that I might
“ instantly confide you to his care.”

“ The colour came into my face, and I
“ dared not answer. I thought of Ulric,
“ lately returned from a campaign in Italy,
“ whom I expected every day. ‘ Why,’
“ thought I with a sigh, ‘ does he not now
“ make his appearance? Could they but
“ meet!’

“ ‘ I request but one favour,’ said Con-
“ rad, embracing me again, ‘ one single fa-
“ vour: do not give your hand to one of
“ my persecutors; you are too good, too
“ handsome, to become the prey of a de-
“ mon!’

“ I promised what he wished, and we
“ tore ourselves from each other’s arms.
“ Perhaps we had already wasted too much
“ time: in our critical situation every mo-
“ ment was precious.

“ Weeping I returned to my chamber,
“ and there found consolation: My dear
“ Ulric had sent me an express, who had
“ entered while I was accompanying my
“ brother by a private way out of the
“ castle.

“ ‘ O!’ cried I, ‘ where is thy master?
“ Why was he not here an hour sooner,
“ if, as I hope, he is in the neighbour-
“ hood?’

“ ‘ He is coming, madam: he will be
“ here

“ here in a moment ; he begs to speak to
“ you in private ; and requests you will
“ admit him by the back gate.”

“ ‘ Does he come that way ! ’ replied
“ I, with joy : ‘ then he will meet my
“ brother ; he will see him, and may speak
“ to him of our love !—Does he know my
“ brother ? ”

“ ‘ No : ’ said the man, with a look of
“ alarm : ‘ No, madam, I believe not.”
“ But has Mr. Langen indeed taken the
“ road which my master is coming ? ”

“ Yes, yes ; they must meet. Ah, if
“ they do but know, if they do not miss
“ each other ! ”

“ ‘ But your brother, is he not pursued
“ by the secret tribunal ? ”

“ ‘ What a question ! ’ replied I. ‘ Would
“ you . . . but no : I cannot suspect a
“ confidant of Ulric.’

“ I must leave you, I must leave you,”
“ cried the servant. ‘ I must hasten to pre-
“ vent a misfortune.’

“ I saw him depart, more dead than
“ alive with fear. ‘ What is he going to
“ do ? ’ thought I : ‘ To prevent a misfor-
“ tune, or to commit a treachery ?
“ Yet, he is a servant of Ulric No :
“ he cannot be a traitor. Is he not the
“ sole confidant of our loves ? the sole
“ messenger of our secrets ? Have I ever
“ remarked in him a suspicious action ? ”

“ I walked

" I walked backwards and forwards in
" my chamber in agitation inconceivable.
" Now I ran to the window, then to the
" door, to see if Ulric were coming
" ' Where can he stay ? ' said I ' Did
" not his messenger say, that he would be
" here in a moment ? '

" Evening came, but no Ulric. I was
" sitting in my chamber alone, without
" light, and giving up myself wholly to
" my grief, when suddenly the door open-
" ed ; a man appeared : I should have
" taken him for Ulric from his figure,
" which I could yet distinguish, notwith-
" standing the darkness, and from the
" palpitation of my heart the moment he
" entered, had he not, instead of running
" to throw himself at my feet, advanced
" gently a few steps, then again drawn
" back, and, leaning against the wall, turn-
" ed his face from me.

" ' Who are you ? ' said I, with a tre-
" mulous voice.

" A sigh was the only answer I re-
" ceived.

" ' Is it not you, Ulric ? ' added I ; and
" I ran to him with open arms. ' Yes it
" is : that sigh betrays you.'

" ' Retire, madam, retire : do not touch
" me ; my hands are stained with blood.'

" ' With blood ! Alas, Ulric, you are
" wounded ! Help ! Help !

" ' No,

“ ‘ No, I am not wounded ; but have
“ inflicted a wound,’ said he, with a furi-
“ ous tone.

“ ‘ And whom have you wounded ?
“ asked I, trembling.

“ ‘ Your brother, whom his cruel fate
“ delivered into my hands.’

“ My waiting woman, who had heard
“ me cry for help, now entered with a
“ light. Ulric and I stood facing each
“ other, living pictures of the deepest de-
“ spair. My countenance spoke my feel-
“ ings : his was pale and wan, he had a
“ sword in his hand, and was covered
“ with blood.

“ ‘ My brother !’ replied I, after a long
“ silence : ‘ my brother ! The blood then
“ with which thy hands are polluted is
“ Conrad’s ? Wretch that thou art, what
“ has impelled thee to the perpetration of
“ so black a deed ?’

“ ‘ Alas ! dire necessity. I am bound
“ by a terrible oath.’

“ ‘ Necessity compel thee to assassinate
“ my brother ! . . . Oh, villain !’

“ ‘ Ah, why did I encounter him ! Why
“ did you send him to meet me ? You
“ knew that I sought to avoid him : did
“ not my messenger tell you so ?’

“ ‘ Your messenger ! Necessity ! a ter-
“ rible oath !’ cried I, without knowing
“ what

“ what I said, and I fell senseless into the
“ arms of my servant.

“ When I came to myself Ulric was
“ gone. The maid who supported me
“ said, that he had muttered some unintel-
“ ligible words, and at last retired, declar-
“ ing, that he would justify himself, and
“ I should be forced to pardon him.

“ ‘ Pardon him ! Pardon him the
“ death of my brother !’

“ I passed the night in the most dread-
“ ful agitation. The impossibility of de-
“ veloping this inextricable labyrinth al-
“ most distracted me. Morning brought
“ new griefs. A report was spread, that
“ Conrad had been arrested near his castle
“ by the free judges, and conducted to
“ the prison of Osnabruck.

“ A cold sweat bedewed my face, when
“ I heard the fatal news. A terrible mys-
“ tery began to unfold itself to my eyes,
“ and the pressure of my griefs almost ren-
“ dered me insensible.

“ Ulric’s servant, who a few hours af-
“ ter requested to be admitted to my pre-
“ sence, converted my conjectures into
“ certainty. He would not avow, that
“ his master was a member of the secret
“ tribunal ; their oath, you know, obliges
“ them to secrecy on that head ; but the
“ circumstances he related, to justify Ulric,
“ proved it too clearly.

“ He

“ He owned that his master had heard
 “ of my brother’s misfortune, had been
 “ greatly affected by it, had sworn to carry
 “ me away secretly, with or without my
 “ consent, and that, resolved to avoid
 “ Conrad, and displaying the greatest ap-
 “ prehension of meeting him on the road,
 “ he had sent this servant before, in order
 “ to prevent the interview he dreaded.

“ ‘ But his destiny,’ added the servant,
 “ ‘ rendered all these precautions vain, by
 “ throwing Conrad in his way. My mas-
 “ ter knew him not; but seeing a cavalier
 “ coming from the castle, he suspected it
 “ to be your brother, and deemed it not
 “ incompatible with his duty to turn back,
 “ and thus avoid the sad necessity of at-
 “ tacking him. He hid himself in the
 “ wood, let Conrad pass, and then resumed
 “ his way, hoping to arrive quietly at the
 “ castle, when another person appeared,
 “ with whom he was also unacquainted,
 “ but who soon made himself known in a
 “ manner, that threw Ulric into the great-
 “ est consternation. He whispered in his
 “ ear the commission with which he was
 “ charged; declaring at the same time that
 “ alone, he was too weak to execute it,
 “ and therefore claimed his assistance. My
 “ master started some difficulties; when
 “ the stranger uttered certain words that
 “ compelled him to follow. They went
 “ together

“ together, and found your brother and
 “ another knight, reposing under a tree.
 “ This knight seems to have been led there
 “ by chance, and probably knew not with
 “ whom he was in company; yet he
 “ thought himself obliged in honour to
 “ take the part of a man attacked by two
 “ at once. They fought; my master and
 “ his comrade were victors; your bro-
 “ ther’s second was put to flight, and him-
 “ self, after being severely wounded, was
 “ made prisoner, and conveyed to Ofna-
 “ bruck.”

“ Ulric, as his domestic assured me,
 “ behaved nobly in the combat. He re-
 “ fused to assist in conducting Conrad to
 “ prison, and hastened to me, to confess
 “ the crime he had been obliged to com-
 “ mit, and implore my pardon: I an-
 “ swered, I had no pardon to grant him:
 “ he might possibly have acted agreeably
 “ to his cruel duty, but it was no longer
 “ permitted me to think of a man through
 “ whom my brother was about to die an
 “ infamous death: I had vowed beside ne-
 “ ver to be the wife of one of his perse-
 “ cutors, and . . . we were separated for
 “ ever. I desired the servant to impart
 “ this to his master.

“ Ulric came to me, to convince me of
 “ his innocence. Our interview was pain-
 “ ful. Love and duty assailed me by turns;
 Vol. II. H “ but

“ but duty conquered, and Ulric was for ever banished from my sight.

“ I shall pass over the regret I, perhaps, afterwards felt, respecting the conduct I had pursued on this occasion, particularly when my brother had escaped from prison, and a more perfect acquaintance with the terrible oath, which obliged Ulric and his comrades to commit such acts of savage barbarity, had taught me to excuse him.

“ Before the period arrived, when I might have indulged such regret, I was become the wife of Bernard, and Ulric the husband of Catherine. These double ties forbade us ever to think of each other, and nothing was left for us but to forget the past.

“ Having recited these circumstances, I need not tell you, that your situation recalled most painfully to my mind these early events of my life : and that I had sufficient reason to warn you not to contract an intimacy with Ulric. I knew him : I was aware of the rigour of his duty ; and I could not but fear, what has since happened, a repetition of my brother’s catastrophe.”

“ Thanks, thanks to that fate,” cried Herman, pressing the hand of Alicia to his heart, “ which has made you my sister-in-law, and has willed, that, though I
“ was

" was deaf to your counsel, I should still
" owe my life to you.

" Poor young man," replied she, " how
" did I wish, that my fears, my terrors, on
" your account, might be the means of
" sparing you the smallest of your suffer-
" ings! Meanwhile I too ought to thank
" Heaven for having given me a brother
" like you, and that I have at least found
" in my husband's family one man whom
" I can really esteem . . . independently of
" him, to whom my respect and attach-
" ment are due."

These last words did not escape Herman. He perceived that Alicia's attention to her husband were founded solely on a sentiment of duty, attachment, and the gratitude with which his tenderness must naturally inspire a mind such as her's. He could not, therefore, avoid asking how she had become his wife.

" ' My brother's affairs,' answered she,
" ' were in a bad state. Such of his pos-
" sessions as were entailed, were vested in
" the hands of trustees, and a guardian
" was appointed me. This guardian was
" your brother. You may guess the rest.
" He took a liking to me, and asked my
" hand. I was poor, forlorn, separated
" from my lover, and . . . I married him.

" Nothing has disturbed our union.
" Gratitude has supplied the place of love

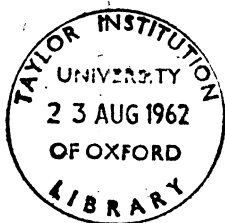
“ in my heart ; and my husband’s senti-
“ ments for me have been powerfully sup-
“ ported by the vanity of having become
“ the protector of an unfortunate orphan,
“ and by the universal applause bestowed
“ on his choice. I have been happy enough
“ to conceal from him, and from all the
“ world, my first attachment, and to pre-
“ vent any misunderstanding between him
“ and my former lover. My conduct has
“ been such, that I have never received
“ from your brother the smallest reproach.
“ Soon after my marriage, Ulric became
“ my brother-in-law : how distressing there-
“ fore would it have been, had I given
“ cause for suspicion, or distrust !”

“ But there is one circumstance, that is
“ still a mystery,” said Herman. “ How
“ was it possible for Ulric so soon to con-
“ sole himself ? And how, after having
“ lost an Alicia, could he wed a Cath-
“ erine ?”

“ With that I am little acquainted,”
answered Alicia : “ yet, I will tell you
“ what I know, and what are my con-
“ jectures. Catherine of Unna, having an
“ insuperable aversion to the life of a clois-
“ ter, to which she was destined, imagined
“ that the surest way of escaping her im-
“ pending fate would be to have recourse
“ to the enemy of her family, the old count
“ of Unna. This protector of the op-
“ pressed

“ pressed received her with open arms ; he
“ thought her ill-used, that she had sufficient
“ reason to complain, and promised to
“ find her a husband. It was at his house
“ she became acquainted with Mr. de Senden.
“ At that time the features of Catherine
“ were more agreeable than at
“ present ; and she had the art of concealing
“ the defects of her mind.

“ The heart of Ulric breathed nothing
“ but revenge, for the change that had
“ taken place in my sentiments respecting
“ him. He probably thought he should
“ give me pain, by marrying my sister-in-law,
“ and thus become as it were a living
“ reproach in my eyes, of what he had
“ termed my inconstancy. In his marriage
“ he unhappily found his own punishment ;
“ as you may judge from the manner in
“ which it was effected. The count of
“ Unna was too warmly attached to Ulric,
“ and knew too well the disposition of Catherine
“ to disapprove the match. He
“ married them, however, at his earnest
“ entreaty, and then left them to their
“ fate.”



CHAPTER XVI.

HERMAN was not perfectly satisfied with the explanation Alicia had given of certain particulars in her narrative; but it would not, he thought, have been decorous openly to have confessed it. His first difficulties related to the marriage of Catherine; the next to that part of Alicia's story which respected the mysteries of the secret tribunal; mysteries, that are now become in many respects, unfathomable, and of which the documents that have reached us afford but little information.

Ulric of Senden was a principal object of his reflections. The unhappy adventure of the oaks had not extinguished in the heart of Herman the inclination he had previously felt for his brother-in-law. Though the event had nearly cost him his life, it lowered not Ulric in his eyes, but increased his esteem for him. Even his behaviour towards Conrad, was, in his opinion, easily justified. A man, who had the courage to sacrifice his dearest inclinations to his supposed duty, deserved as he thought, respect and admiration, or at least compassion. No doubt he judged erroneously, or at least extended his
maxim

maxim too far; but he lived in an age that must have inspired notions different from ours.

Alicia, at heart, perhaps, more attached to Senden than she had avowed, was little qualified to rectify the judgment of Herman on this occasion: she endeavoured, however, to divert him from his project of continuing to seek the friendship of Ulric, and to convince him, that no intimacy could subsist between them, while the sentence of the secret tribunal remained in force.

"But he loves me," said Herman, interrupting her; "he himself declared, at the dreadful moment, that his heart was irresistibly drawn towards mine. . . . Can he suppose, that he has not already sufficiently fulfilled his cruel duty by the blood he has shed; and that he may not henceforward live in friendship with me?"

"Do as you please," answered Alicia with a sigh: "take it not ill of me, however, if I never leave you a single moment alone; and if, when I cannot watch you myself, I appoint others to supply my place."

Herman availed himself of the first instant of his perfect recovery, to visit Ulric. Joy sparkled in the eyes of Senden, when he beheld our young hero cured of his wound,

wound, though it was soon obscured by a tear. He advanced to meet him with open arms, as if he would have pressed him to his bosom: but, recollecting himself, this cordial reception was exchanged for a cold and formal bow.

“Is it then impossible,” cried Herman, “to move thy heart in my favour? Have I not been able, though at the price of my blood, to purchase thy friendship?”

Ulric turned aside to conceal his emotion. “One day, perhaps,” answered he, pressing his hand; “one day, perhaps . . . but at present it is impossible. Believe me, I am more unfortunate than yourself.”

Alicia, who was present, turned the conversation to Herman's adventure near Fritzlar; and he related, in a manner so clear, the false appearances which had occasioned him to be accused of the murder of duke Frederic; and the motives which had induced the tribunal of princes at Nuremberg, to pronounce him innocent, that the least suspicion respecting him could not remain. Ulric begged him not to forget the cause of his flight, and the business that had brought him into this part of the world; and, when Herman had fully satisfied him on this subject, Senden fell into a profound reverie, from which the conversation

sation of Alicia and our knight, could with difficulty rouse him.

"Herman," said he, at length, "consider, that I am not thy judge, if I were, heaven knows how favourable I should perhaps be to thee!"

"You must, you shall be my judge!" cried Herman, "and tell me, what you think in your heart of my character and situation!"

"For God's sake," replied Ulric, "speak no more to me of things respecting which I am forbidden to be explicit."

These last words vexed Alicia, and made Herman sad. They parted from Ulric. Bernard returned from Engelrading; the time for confidential interviews was past; they met only at table. Herman, who felt his strength renewed, grew tired of remaining longer at the castle. He reflected on his business with the old count of Unna; he had been obliged to suspend it but too long, and he hastened to depart.

Madam Unna advised him not to inform her husband that he was going to visit the enemy of their family; but, as the abbess of Marienhagen knew his design, it was no secret to Bernard. Every imaginable means were employed to induce him to renounce his intention. Bernard represented to him the disgrace it would be, to demand succour and protection of

the count, while he had such a brother as himself. Ursula cited the story of Catherine, who had formerly had recourse to the old gentleman, without obtaining any thing from him, but the hand of a man who loved her not. They went so far even as to invent numberless obstacles to hinder Herman from executing his design : but he remained unshaken in his resolution, and disappointed them all, by departing in the night, without taking leave of them. He ran, however, to bid adieu to the good-nuns of Uberwasser, and thence repaired in haste to the castle of Senden, to embrace the children of Catherine.

Ulric, who was perfectly cured, had quitted Plettenburg before Herman. The latter hoped to find his brother-in-law at home, and have a friendly interview with him ; but he was told by Catherine, that he had set out on a journey the evening before, and that she had reason to believe, he was gone to the old count of Unna.

At every inn where he stopped, Herman found his sister's supposition confirmed. Ulric had regularly preceded him a few hours, and when he entered the castle of Unna, he perceived some of Senden's attendants in the court.

At first he knew not what to think of the circumstance ; but the ingeniousness of
his

his own mind, soon removed his apprehensions. Ulric might have business with the count of Unna, as well as himself; indeed, this must necessarily be the case, the count being the chief of the secret tribunal in that district, and Senden one of the free judges.

In those days it had not yet become customary to dance attendance for days together in a great man's antichamber, without obtaining an audience. He who first arrived, was first introduced. Herman, therefore, was no sooner announced, than admitted. He entered, and found Ulric at the door.

The place rendered any conversation between them impossible. They embraced, indeed, as they passed; but this embrace was so cold on the part of Senden, that Herman was struck with it, and could not help suspecting the nature of the motive that had brought him to Unna.

The old count, whose locks were white as snow, but whose eyes were animated with all the fire of youth, cast on Herman, as he entered, a severe and penetrating look. "Who are you, young man?" said he, with a solemn gravity.

The venerable aspect of the count, and the air of dignity imprinted on all his features, impelled Herman, as he named himself, to bow before him more profoundly than

than he had been wont to kings themselves.

“What is your business?”

“To demand justice.”

“Rash youth! For the murderer of duke Frederic to demand justice, is to expose himself to the danger of losing his head.”

“I am not the murderer of duke Frederic.”

“Prove it.”

“My own heart, and this testimony of the duke of Austria, are my proofs.”

“The first, thine heart, I am unable to read; and the second is insufficient.”

“The duke of Austria was not present when the crime was committed.”

“God then, whose eye was alike open both on the assassin and on me: him I call to witness.”

“Appearances are against you?”

“What equitable judge permits himself to be determined by appearances?”

“I fit not here as your judge.”

“Be so then, as my friend, the friend of innocence oppressed.”

“As your relation, if you please; as a person, who wishes to see you justified.”

“But, why so dilatory, young man, in having recourse to me. I perceive an

irresolution in your conduct which agrees not with innocence. I have been in-

“formed

“ formed that you came purposely to ask
“ my advice ; but that, feeling it too irk-
“ some to wait my return, you thought
“ proper to resort to persons whom I
“ hate, with whom you had hitherto lived
“ yourself on bad terms, and with whom
“ you have now, it seems, suddenly be-
“ come reconciled. Their hatred would
“ have recommended you more effectually
“ than their friendship : they are a cursed
“ race, from which there has not sprung a
“ single individual worthy of esteem, for
“ two generations.”

“ My lord, they are my brothers and
“ sisters.”

“ Yes, unfortunately ; but for that, you
“ would be more welcome to me.”

“ Can the count of Unna, the chief of
“ the first tribunal in the world, give judg-
“ ment so partially ? Beside, there are in
“ my family an Agnes and a Petronilla,
“ an Alicia of Langen, and an Ulric of
“ Senden.”

“ Leave the women to themselves ; they
“ enter not into the account ; and as to
“ Ulric of Senden”

“ Upon my honour,” said Herman, in-
“ terrupting him, and lifting his hands to
“ heaven, “ I believe him to be the noblest
“ of human beings.”

“ What he whose murderous sword had
“ nearly deprived you of life !”

“ He

"He did his duty. . . . No doubt I am hated by him; perhaps even pursued by him hither. Yet I cannot but love him."

The count was silent, cast down his eyes, and appeared deeply absorbed in thought. "Yes," replied he, after a long interval, "Ulric has been with me; he has said a great deal concerning you, and has occasioned no small alteration in the reception I should have given you. . . . You may withdraw: when I have need of your presence I will send for you."

Herman retired, his heart filled with a thousand different sensations.

"Beware, however, of flying," cried the count of Unna, as he went out: "your pursuers are every where."

"Flying!" replied Herman, with a tone of contempt: "innocence cannot fly."

Thus ended an audience, from which so much had been expected, and on which the duke of Austria had built every hope for his favourite. In the count, Herman described nothing but the haughty relation, the prejudiced judge, whose good disposition towards him he suspected had been poisoned by perfidious manœuvres.

"He has said a great deal concerning me! he has occasioned no small change in my reception!" said Herman to him-

self. " Ah! Ulric, Ulric! I could pardon thee the shedding my blood, but these false imputations against me, to a man on whom I placed all my hope!— No: this I cannot pardon Thy duty may require thee to deprive me of life; but what laws could oblige thee to slander me?"

In the evening, Herman was sent for by the count of Unna.

" You no doubt know what you ought to think of Senden," said the count.

" Hitherto I did not know: I have now learnt."

" You must speak to me ingenuously; explain yourself therefore Do you think he has completely fulfilled his duty towards you?"

" I know not, precisely, of what nature are the duties which he and his colleagues are bound to fulfill?"

" Relate to me circumstantially what passed between you in the forest. Tell me on what terms you lived together before, and how he has treated you since. You have no reason to spare him: he did not spare you."

Herman related the story as desired. The count shook his head. " This is horrible," said he: " and he did not warn you of the danger that threatened you?"

" Did

“ Did not give you the least hint to induce
 “ you to avoid him ?”

“ He could not warn me, I imagine,
 “ without breaking the oath by which he
 “ is bound.”

“ Yet, if he loved you, if he pitied you,
 “ as you then imagined, it seems to me he
 “ ought to have cautioned you.”

“ I considered his action as the greatest
 “ sacrifice he could make to his severe, his
 “ cruel duty. I thought in reality that he
 “ loved me, and that it was with painful
 “ reluctance he plunged his poniard into
 “ my bosom : yet, now that he has been
 “ capable of calumniating me, that he has
 “ sought to alienate from me the heart of
 “ my respected relation ! . . .”

“ This is foreign to the purpose. One
 “ question more. It is said you were both
 “ wounded. . . . They were probably those
 “ slight sorts of wounds, made by mutual
 “ agreement. People are at hand, ready
 “ stationed to assist the wounded ; the
 “ wounds are bound up ; and the parties
 “ imagine they have fulfilled all that ho-
 “ nour prescribes to them.”

Herman began again the recital of his
 terrible adventure. He described Ulric's
 previous self-conflict in the most affecting
 manner, and the violence he seemed to
 have done himself, in drenching his sword
 in his brother's blood ; and he finished
 with

with shewing the scar that remained in his side. "Large as this is, added he, "Senden spared himself still less; he seemed desirous of reaching the grave before him whom he conceived himself obliged to send thither, that he might not witness his last moments. His life long held by a single thread, when mine was already out of danger."

"His wound, then, was actually inflicted by his own hand, not by your's?"

"By mine! could I possibly have lifted my hand against my dear Ulric!"

"This is too horrible!" exclaimed the count, clasping his hands together: "A fratricide, and a suicide! Behold the terrible consequences of a justice which is said to be the semblance of that of heaven! Wretched mortals! when will ye shake off these cruel chains? . . . Herman, my son, my dear son! Ulric of Senden, my friend, the unhappy victim of thy duty! . . . Embrace each other! your differences are for ever at an end!"

As he said these words, the count opened a door that was by his side. Ulric rushed forward, and closely folded Herman in his arms. "My brother! my friend!" cried he: "At length I can give utterance to my feelings: I dare speak what I think of thee."

Herman

Herman stood as if petrified. He comprehended nothing of what he saw, or what he heard, and was indetermined whether he should return the caresses he received from Ulric.

“Young man,” resumed the count, “you are ignorant of what has been going forward here to-day. You do not suspect, perhaps, that you and your friend have been put to a most dangerous proof. The life of one, and my good opinion of the other, were at stake : but your deposition has saved both. Ulric of Senden, who had already been accused of not having properly discharged his duty, as an instrument of secret vengeance, in the affair of Conrad of Langen, was charged with having failed in it a second time with regard to you. It was said, that he had cautioned you, and given you arms to defend yourself ; that he had wounded you only to save appearances, and had, for the same reason, been wounded himself. Such faults, alas ! to which humanity ought to give another name, are punished by us with death. The conduct of Ulric gave a plausible face to the accusation. He arose, and contested in the secret tribunal the sentence that had been passed on you ; he defended your innocence, and even demanded leave to
“ resign

“ resign his place, to be divested of the
“ sad dignity of executioner of the divine
“ vengeance, that he might live with you
“ in brotherly amity. Upon this he was
“ condemned. For my part, I trembled
“ at the injustice committed under the sa-
“ cred name of our tribunal. I insisted
“ on an investigation of the affair. Your
“ arrival afforded me a favourable oppor-
“ tunity of discovering the truth. Some
“ words that I let fall gave you reason to
“ suppose that Ulric had slandered you to
“ me. The displeasure this excited in
“ your mind removes every suspicion of
“ your partiality in his favour. You an-
“ swered my studied questions without
“ preparation; and your answers agree
“ with his. Thus Ulric is justified; and
“ Herman, as a reward for his ingenuouf-
“ ness, obtains the liberty of being in fu-
“ ture the friend of his brother-in-law
“ without any apprehension, as the resig-
“ nation of the latter will be accepted
“ without difficulty.”

“ And will not Herman, too, be justi-
“ fied?” said Ulric, who held the hand of
the young knight in his own.

“ I ardently wish it: but, alas! what
“ I have learnt from you respecting him,
“ though demonstration in my eyes, is not
“ so in those of others; and he must betake
“ himself to flight. Time renders possible
“ things

“ things that at present can scarcely be expected. One important circumstance, however, I have discovered from you, my dear Ulric : it is, that besides Kunzman, who at his death declared Herman an accomplice in his crime, two or three others engaged in the murder of duke Frederic were seen, who, perhaps designedly, have not been sought after with sufficient diligence. God knows how an enquiry into this important point came to be neglected when judgment was given ! But vengeance will overtake those villains, and their depositions will confirm or contradict that of Kunzman, and show where lies the truth.”

“ They will be found to contradict it,” cried Herman, “ or I am not worthy of being related to the noble count of Unna.”

“ I trust that you are worthy of it. You shall be my relation, nay, my son, if time justify you in the eyes of the world, as you are already justified in mine.”

CHAPTER XVII.

THE two friends quitted the count to enjoy their happiness in retirement.

“Thou wert my defender to the count, then; and not my accuser!” said Herman as soon as he had a little recovered from his surprize.

“Could the generous Herman suspect his Ulric of treachery?”

“From this moment, then, I may call thee my brother, my friend. Thou wilt no longer persecute oppressed innocence; thou wilt no longer shut thy ears to the voice of truth.”

“Did I ever shut them to it? No: the truth and thy innocence stood confessed to my sight. Thus a mortal terror seized me, when I saw thee adorned with every manly grace, asking my friendship, confiding in my honour with all thy native frankness, while, on the other hand, a voice within me whispered: ‘the judges have condemned, and thou must kill him.’ Incessantly was I pursued by thine image, now pale and bloody, then smiling and begging mercy of me. My heart

“ heart was oppressed, my reason wa-
“ vered : a thousand times was I tempted
“ to kill myself alone ; but I was com-
“ pelled to act as I did.—Let us, howe-
“ ver, forget what is past ; the chains are
“ broken ; thou hast pardoned me ; and
“ we are friends for ever.”

The joy felt by Herman, at having gained a place in so noble a heart, increased as Ulric spoke ; but his friend became silent all at once and thoughtful.

“ Leave me,” said he at length, “ I forgot, that, till night, till the free judges meet, I shall not be released from my oath ; and that in the mean time our situation remains as before.”

Herman smiled at the extreme exactness of his brother-in-law, and left him in order to prepare for his journey, which the count had so strongly recommended to him to hasten, and which was no otherwise disagreeable than as it bore the odious appellation of flight.

What passed in the secret tribunal with respect to Ulric of Senden, in what manner he was dismissed from that great and mysterious society * which had extended
it's

* The secrecy maintained in the society of the invisibles, says Moeser, went so far, that not only was the public ignorant of the cause of the death of a person executed by order of the secret tribunal, but

it's empire over half Europe, and how he was divested both of the will and the power of taking a part in its transactions for the future, remained concealed from Herman: and when afterwards, in their confidential moments, he put some questions on the subject to Ulric, Ulric looked at him with displeasure, and imposed silence on him.

The next day Herman found his friend infinitely more amiable. His behaviour was free and open; his air gay and jocund; and, if nothing were said respecting the society he had the preceding night abjured, there seemed no secret in his heart which he was not ready to disclose.

He spoke without reserve, not only of the love which he had felt for the charming Alicia, and which, alas! was not yet totally extinguished, but also of his singular marriage with Catherine. His adventures with the latter he recited in a manner too extensive to find a place here. Suffice it to say, that Catherine employed all possible means to obtain his love, and to eradicate from his heart the image of his former

but even the emperor himself knew not what passed in that formidable court of judicature. It was not even permitted him to ask the names of those who were condemned by it; except that, if he mentioned any names, he was answered by a simple yes, or no.

her mistress, of whose name she was ignorant. Vexation, and a wish perhaps to avenge herself of the inexorable Alicia, had seconded her endeavours, and by solicitations and secret intrigues all other obstacles were removed.

In those days there was no considerable family, in which were not to be found one or more monks, who, under the title of confessors, meddled in all its affairs, amongst which ill-suited and unhappy marriages were not the least important. Hence no doubt came the proverb: *marriages are made in heaven*: for the monks always spoke in the name of the Lord, whenever to serve their own ends, they thought proper to effect a union of this kind. Their address was far superior to that of our modern match-makers: and the persons whom it pleased these adepts to unite by indissoluble bonds, could not escape their fate, whatever were the inconveniencies of the alliance. On this occasion, father Boniface, Catherine's confessor, exerted his abilities; she became madam Senden; and the rest was left to providence.

The count of Unna, during the twelve-month that Catherine spent with him, had more than one occasion of observing her faults. His acquaintance with her disposition confirmed him in the opinion he had been accustomed to form of her family in general,

general, and he consented to her marriage with the worthy Ulric with regret. Reader, thou canst form no conception of the authority, which, in those unhappy times, monks exercised over the best disposed minds.

The count of Unna may with justice be ranked among the most enlightened men of his age. We have heard his sentiments of the secret tribunal, which agree better with these times of general illumination, than with the ignorance of his own. Yet was he sufficiently susceptible of weaknesses and prejudices. Of this his invincible hatred towards the family of Unna, his cousins, is a proof. His obstinacy on this head was so great, that all Herman could say in favour of them, was taken ill, and, had he persisted in defending them, he would have risked sharing the enmity of the count. Ulric was so convinced of this that he thought proper to warn him in private to desist.

“ You are not aware,” said he, one day,
 “ how dear the good understanding, that
 “ appears to reign between you and your
 “ family, had like to have cost you. It was
 “ true, that I made your uncle change his
 “ resolution with regard to the reception
 “ he intended you ; but in a way the re-
 “ verse of that in which you understood
 “ it. The count, who, without knowing
 VOL. II. I “ you,

“ you, had always loved you, because you
“ were on bad terms with his cousins,
“ whom he detested, fell into an extreme
“ rage, when he heard, that you had gone
“ to visit them, before you had waited
“ upon him, and that they were reconciled
“ to you, and had treated you with kind-
“ ness. I had great difficulty to remove
“ the prejudice he had, on this account,
“ conceived against you ; and to prevent
“ his sending you away, as was his deter-
“ mination, without seeing you.”

Herman learnt from this discourse the fresh obligations he lay under to Ulric : but he sighed to think, that the best characters had their faults ; and conceived, that, in the end, he should find it difficult to accommodate himself to the littlenesses of his uncle, which made him look forwards with a sort of pleasure to the day of his departure.

The chevalier had expressed a desire to repair to Venice, to join the knights of the Teutonic Order, who were then making a campaign against the Turks ; and the old count had opposed it only from the fear, that he would there meet and form an intimacy with his brother John. Herman knew, that his brother, who was spoken of as an amiable young man, had entered into that order ; and he could not avoid owning to himself, that the desire
of

of meeting him was his principal motive for wishing to see Venice; but the prudent Ulric advised him not to disclose this motive to the count; and by observing this precaution, he at length obtained his uncle's consent; and was presented by him with an equipage more splendid perhaps than any lord of Unna had ever possessed.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WELL disposed as was the count of Unna towards his nephew, his office obliged him to act with secrecy, Herman, as yet, not having obtained a repeal of the sentence pronounced against him by the secret tribunal. The sword of the invisibles still remained suspended over his head, and circumstances might occur, in which his uncle, with all his power, would be unable to succour him.

Both the count and Ulric must have been aware of these dangers, for the preparations for our hero's departure were urged with the utmost speed, and Senden could

with difficulty consent to suffer him to depart alone.

Herman reminded him of his children, who, during his absence, would be left to the sole care of a mother, little qualified to have the charge of their education ; and stated to him, that, being alone, his flight would be more easily accomplished. Ulric yielded to these arguments, embraced his friend, and took leave. The equipage and attendants given him by his uncle had, for the greater safety, been sent before to the place of their destination.

Hitherto Herman had not been accustomed to flight ; and, forgetting that his journey was in reality of that description, he travelled with as much confidence as if he had nothing to fear. His sole precaution was to choose a disguise, by means of which he might appear without being known in the midst of his pursuers, and take the road dictated by his heart.

What this road was may be easily guessed. Love and friendship called him to Nuremberg, where he knew duke Albert still resided, and where he conjectured Ida might also be. He was ignorant of what had happened to the princess since his departure ; he was ignorant, that the step she had taken to save him, that the audacity with which she had ventured to pry into the secrets of the terrible unknown judges,

judges, had been attended with the most melancholy consequences to her and her father; and had soon constrained her to fly, in order to escape the vengeance of her enemies.

Herman was well acquainted with all the windings of duke Albert's house. The first thing he did therefore on entering a city where he hoped to find all that was most dear to him, was to repair to the duke's, and make his appearance, when least expected, and before his gentlemen in waiting, a species of animals less numerous then than now, had time to announce him.

The disguise of Herman did not long impose on his friend. Soon he folded him in his arms, exclaiming, "Herman, my dear, my unhappy Herman!"

"Why unhappy? Am I not with my prince? Shall I not see my Ida, or at least hear news of her? Are not my prospects brightening? . . . Ah, my lord! how much am I indebted to you, for sending me to my respectable relation! What has he not done for me! what has he not promised me hereafter! That I shall become his son, if my innocence, which he considers as already proved, be publicly acknowledged. What flattering hopes for my love! . . . Do you think the count of Wirttemberg
" will

" will refuse his daughter to the son of his
 " old friend the count of Unna?"

" Oh! Herman! joy and hope mislead
 " thee. Thy imagination transports itself
 " to future scenes, and thou perceivest not
 " the abyss that yawns at thy feet."

" The abyss! Ah? I understand
 " you. You mean to say, that I am not in
 " safety, that I must not remain here. But
 " one day only, my dear prince, one single
 " day, to relate to you my felicity
 " and and if it be possible, to
 " see Ida."

" Ida? Where is she? Do
 " you then know? Alas! she has
 " been obliged to fly. I gave her some of
 " my people to escort her, and to-day
 " I hear, that she parted from them,
 " and they arrived at Ratisbon without
 " her. Ah! perhaps she is now in the
 " hands of her enemies! Perhaps
 " she is no more! Oh! Herman!
 " Herman! what shall we do to save her,
 " if to save her it be not already too late?"

The duke's anxiety was scarcely short
 of the despair which seized Herman on
 his hearing so unexpectedly this dreadful
 news.

When, however, they were a little
 calm, it was resolved, that Herman should
 immediately repair to Ratisbon, there to
 collect further information, and act as
 circumstances

circumstances should dictate. Duke Albert briefly related what Ida and her father had suffered during his absence, and our youth departed overwhelmed with affliction.

The report of the return of the cavaliers, who were to have escorted Ida to Hungary, was confirmed, and Herman soon learnt the motive that detained him at Ratibon. He heard, too, what prevented them from returning to give an account themselves of what had happened to them, and to the princess entrusted to their charge. That the reader may be duly informed of it, we shall here insert part of the relation given to Herman, by the commander of the party.

“The princess,” said he, “whom we were directed to escort, is, in some measure, the occasion of her own misfortune. She did not think proper to take the road, which we had been directed to pursue, and things turned out as they generally do when women pretend to be wiser than their advisers. When we arrived on the frontiers of Austria, we learnt that Vincellaus had escaped from prison, and that the Bohemians appeared desirous of reinstating him on the throne. Farther reports confirmed this intelligence. It was said, that Vincellaus and his wife had already made
“their

" their entry into Prague, and had received
 " anew the oaths of their subjects, and
 " that this happy event was celebrated
 " throughout the country with joy and
 " feasting. You know the invincible at-
 " tractions scenes of this nature have for
 " women. The princess instantly altered
 " the whole plan of our journey; and old
 " Cunegunda, who attended her, con-
 " firmed her in her whim. They would
 " not listen to our intreaties, and we took
 " with them the road to Prague."

Herman was at no loss to imagine, that
 it was not the desire of pleasure, but that
 of seeing her parents by adoption, and her
 dear Sophia, that had attracted Ida to the
 capital of Bohemia. The narrator conti-
 nued:

" We arrived at Prague. The princess
 " lived retired, and it was easy for us to
 " watch over her safety. At first, she sel-
 " dom went out of her house, which was
 " that of an humble citizen. She did not
 " go to court, but contented herself with
 " informing the queen of her arrival, by
 " whom she was visited. We soon per-
 " ceived, that the riotous festivity of the
 " place, had less attraction for her than
 " the friendship of the empress. Ida and
 " Sophia frequently went out together to
 " the new church of Saint Matthias; or

" the convent of Bethlehem*. Sophia's
 " misfortunes appear to have rendered her
 " devout, and our princess willingly fol-
 " lowed her example. Their religious
 " practices, however, could not have been
 " perfectly conformable to the true faith,
 " for they excited the attention of the
 " archbishop Subinko, and we had reason
 " to believe, that snares were laid by the
 " priests for the princess of Wirtemberg,
 " whom they began to consider as the se-
 " ductress of the queen. All our cau-
 " tion could not prevent her from falling
 " into the hands of her persecutors, one
 " day when she accompanied Sophia in
 " one of her usual walks, during which
 " we were forbidden to attend. The
 " pains we have since taken, to disco-
 " ver the place where she is confined,
 " have been useless. Three days after
 " the event happened, I was sent for by
 " the queen: ' Console yourself,' said
 " she to me, ' and read with attention,
 " this letter I have just received. Pre-
 " serve it carefully; it will put you in
 " mind of what your mistress requires of
 " you."

At these words, the captain took from his pocket a letter, which Herman per-

* The church of St. Matthias, or St. Matthew bore also the name of Bethlehem: there remain few traces of any convent of that name.

ceived was written by the hands of Ida. He kissed it, and read as follows :

“ Have no apprehensions, my august sovereign, for your Ida ; she is out of danger. The only misfortune that has happened to me is, the being conveyed to a convent in Hungary : but my safety, and the interests of duke Albert, required me to visit that country, and my persecutors are themselves obliged to assist me in repairing to a place whither my destiny had before called me.

“ I pray you to dismiss my escort, and direct them to repair with speed to Ratisbon. I have just learnt, by singular accident, that one of the persons most dear to me in the world, is in a situation to require assistance. It is, perhaps, my father. It may be Herman. . . . It is necessary, that the cavaliers remain some days in the city I have mentioned, and endeavour, by strict enquiry, to discover what I can only hint to you obscurely.

“ O Sophia ! Sophia ! When and where shall we meet again ?”

“ And what have you done,” said Herman eagerly, “ in obedience to the prince’s orders ?

“ Nothing,” said the captain, with a smile, “ but wait here for the event announced, which, no doubt, must presently be sent

“ sent itself; for we have not penetration
“ enough to enquire after things of which
“ we have no idea of.”

The love of knights for their mistresses was, in those days, of so exalted a nature, that they considered the least indications of their will as laws. A pretended dream of the lovely Ida, had formerly, as we have seen, sufficient power over Herman, whose motto was, *innocence never flies*, to induce him to retire from his enemies. Remembering this, can we be surprized, that the mysterious words, contained in her letter, should put in motion all the faculties of his mind, to discover and execute her behest. His presence roused the negligent cavaliers into activity; and, before the day was at an end, the prophecy, or presentiment, of the princess of Wirtemberg, who had pointed out Ratisbon as the place, where one of her dearest friends was suffering, was verified, in the same manner as the dream, which had announced the condemnation of Herman by the secret tribunal.

Ida's father had quitted Nuremberg, as we have seen, to conceal himself awhile, and take refuge in Italy. He did not sufficiently divest himself of the appearance of rank, and his secret enemies were too numerous for him to arrive, without danger,

ger, at the place he had chosen for his retreat.

It was not improbable, that, had he remained longer at Nuremberg, he would have been elected emperor in preference to all his competitors. To these, therefore, it was of importance, not only to drive him from thence, but to prevent his return, till the choice had fallen on some other prince. The name of the competitor, who was most active in this business, has never transpired ; but certain it is, that the scheme succeeded ; Count Everard had been attacked on his route, and was actually a prisoner at Ratisbon.

The imperial cities, having long been the declared enemies of the count of Wirtemberg, readily seconded the ill designs of his enemies. Each, on this occasion, would have wished to have acted the principal part ; and the proud citizens of Ratisbon rejoiced, that fortune had so favoured them, as to place in their hands their ancient and most inveterate enemy. The event was the more pleasing to them, as it was sure to deprive him of all hopes of the imperial crown.

The people of Ratisbon confided so much in their own strength, and the powerful assistance promised them, that they made no secret of his captivity. We will not venture to decide, whether, when the knight
of

of fidelity heard of the misfortune of the count, it afforded him greater pain or pleasure; but his deliverance appeared to him a matter as certain as that he was imprisoned; and what a delightful idea, to restore to liberty the father of Ida!

As fortune appears sometimes to have exposed a female to the danger of perishing by fire, or by water, merely to afford her lover an opportunity of saving her, and of thus obtaining her assent to his happiness; might it not, in like manner, have permitted the captivity of a rigid father, that, recovering his liberty by means of the lover of his daughter, his gratitude might soften him, and determine him in favour of his deliverer. This, at least, Herman believed as firmly as the gospel. He accordingly invented a thousand stratagems to attain his end. Though he succeeded in none of them, he did not despair. Time passed away. The imperial crown had been placed on the head of Robert count Palatine, and count Everard was no longer thought of. At length fortune smiled for a moment on the brave Herman, and the father of Ida found himself at liberty in his arms.

The count of Wirtemberg thanked our knight with great emotion, and gave him the pleasing appellation of son; an expression to which Herman probably affixed a meaning,

meaning, that the count by no means intended it should convey. Meanwhile he did not conceal from him, that his liberation would have been infinitely more pleasing, had it been effected earlier: "for," said he, "nothing can now be done for me, till Germany becomes again dissatisfied with its master; a period that I shall probably not live to see."

Herman, who had no great desire of seeing Ida the daughter of an emperor, made no answer to this reflection. He secretly wished long life to the emperor Robert; and that, on his death, his crown might descend to Sigismund. Meanwhile, count Everard sorrowfully prepared anew for his journey to Italy, and did not seem to be averse to the knight of fidelity accompanying him. The interest Herman had taken in his deliverance, the favour he was in with the count of Unna, the hope that he would, in all probability, be soon justified, and, above all, the total disappointment of his ambitious schemes, made the count feel less repugnance to the lover of his daughter than formerly, and consider it sometimes as a thing not impossible, that he might become his son-in-law.

What happiness for our young hero, when, occasionally, a word, or a look, gave him reason to suspect that the count entertained such a thought! Thus he joyously took

took his way to Italy, and the cavaliers of duke Albert, of whom there was no longer need, were dismissed, and returned to their master.

Herman, enchanted, had now scarcely any anxiety but for Ida : and what chiefly consoled him was, his imagining himself under the protection of some benevolent power, who destined him to become, at the appointed time, the most fortunate of husbands.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE relation of the chief of duke Albert's people was true ; but it did not comprize some circumstances of which he was ignorant, and which we shall now impart to the reader.

The report of a happy change in the fortune of Sophia having reached the ears of Ida, on the confines of Austria, the desire of participating the joy of her beloved friend induced the princess to change the road marked out, for good reasons, by duke Albert, and to take that which led to Prague.

She

She alighted at the house, which she still with pleasure called the dwelling of her father. What pen can describe the rapture her presence occasioned? The good dame Munster thought she should die with joy at seeing again her Ida, now princess of Wirtemberg, yet as affectionate, as fond, and as dutiful as ever.

“Where is my father?” cried the princess, when the excess of her joy would permit her to speak.

Mrs. Munster, without having the least doubt respecting whom she meant, went out to send for her husband, who was then superintending the erection of the grand altar of the church of St. Matthias. She directed the servant not to tell him by whom he was wanted, and then hastened to join Ida, from whom she was not absent a moment without regret.

They were sitting side by side, the hand of Maria resting on the knee of her daughter, who held it closely locked in her own, while the other hand of Ida's was passed round her mother's neck; her eyes, in which were painted inexpressible affection, were fixed earnestly on her's; they spoke little, but tears and looks supplied the place of conversation. Such was the affecting picture that presented itself when Munster entered.

Ida.

Ida immediately arose to embrace him. The scene of mute tenderness was renewed; and it was not till after a considerable interval that there at length took place between these happy mortals a conversation, the subject of which the reader will easily conceive, if he has been whole years separated from the object he loves, and has experienced, during the separation, various vicissitudes of good and ill: he will easily conceive, that each wishes at once to lay before the other all that has happened to him; to relate his prosperous and adverse fortune; and recite the minutest circumstances he has found interesting.

The desire of seeing honest Munster and his wife was, perhaps the chief motive that had induced Ida to visit Prague, though not the only one. Sophia was also an inducement; but how could she appear before her? The situation of our heroine did not permit her to show herself publicly at court. Munster, whom the queen knew and esteemed, took upon him to acquaint her with the arrival of the princess of Wirtemberg, and to inform her of the precautions it was necessary to employ. To these Sophia shewed the utmost readiness to conform, and declared, that, the better to conceal her friend's abode at Prague, she would see her only at his house, whither she would repair that
very

very evening, accompanied by one of her ladies.

The gentle and humane disposition of Sophia was even meliorated by misfortune. Her sufferings had destroyed in her every sentiment of pride. She had received too good a lesson on the precariousness of sub-lunary things not to despise the wretched ceremonials attached to her rank. She deemed it no degradation, therefore, to visit the abode of a simple citizen. Friendship led her to the house of Münster, as benevolence and generosity had already frequently led her to visit still more humble dwellings. Ida threw herself into the arms of Sophia. Tears of joy flowed down the cheeks of each; all distinctions of rank were forgotten: so strongly did the queen feel the happiness of pressing to her bosom a true friend, that she would probably have given the same loose to her feelings, had the object been the plebeian Ida Münster instead of the princess of Wirtemberg.

The two friends reciprocally opened their hearts to each other. Sophia related the long tale of her misfortunes; and concluded it with the sorrowful observation, that her husband, the author of so many ills, of which he had himself been the victim, was still not much amended; and that as to herself, the sole advantage she had derived from

from the chagrins which she had participated with him, was to be a little more beloved, and a little more respected by him, than at the beginning of her marriage. Indeed it would have proved Winceflaus to have been a monster, had the faithful companion of his sorrows, his friend, his comforter, not excited in him at least some slight feelings of gratitude.

Sophia was said to have been rendered a devotee by misfortune. She was pious, it is true, but not what is properly called a devotee. It was at this period that John Hufs began to propagate his doctrines. His eloquence, and the strictness of his conduct, procured him a great number of followers. The lax morals of the priests of those days, and the virulence with which they persecuted him, contributed also to his success. The queen was among the number of those who were seduced by the apparent sanctity and rectitude of this new teacher. She took delight in hearing him. She dared not at first indulge her inclination as much as she wished, because the archbishop watched all her steps; but her secret connection with Ida led her, under the veil of secrecy, insensibly to take more liberty than before.

Indifferently dressed, and often on foot and without any attendant, the queen went frequently to visit her friend, who accompanied

accompanied her to the church of St. Matthias. Sophia, in spite of her disguise, still preserved an air of dignity, that betrayed her; and the good citizens' wives were delighted to find that their queen thus mingled with them, and shared their devotions.

The doctrines of Hufe made singular progress among the women. A great many ladies of the first rank prided themselves in attending his sermons, divested of their ornaments and clad in all the simplicity of the primitive christians.

The hand of Munster had executed a master-piece of sculpture, which decorated the church where Hufe delivered his doctrine: but, placed in a private chapel, it was seen only by a few. Different groups of statues, that did honour to the skilful and learned artist, represented, on one side, the divine founder of the christian religion, with his humble disciples, in their genuine simplicity; and on the other, the pope of Rome, in all the vain and ostentatious pomp of royalty, attended by his cardinals. Ida requested her father to show this performance to the queen. Sophia was delighted at seeing before her eyes the exact representation of what Hufe had often so boldly depicted in his sermons; and employed an able painter to copy it in miniature. This picture was placed in the queen's oratory.

Hufe

Hufs continued to thunder against the manners of the ecclesiastics of his day. He frequently alluded to the fine sculpture of Munster; thousands came to see it; many followed the example of Sophia, and procured copies of it, which were publicly displayed in their houses, in testimony of the truth of the reformer's doctrine. The priests, inflamed with rage, fixed their eyes on the queen, whom they charged with being the instigator of these disorders; but, placed in too elevated a station for them to wreak their vengeance on her, they accused Ida of having seduced her, and, as the person dearest to Sophia, they determined to vent on her all the fury of their wrath.

Hufs was attacked more openly. The affair was examined into in due form, a proceeding which brought considerable presents to Winzellaus, whose corruptibility was well known. Nor was he ungrateful. Considering Hufs * as the first cause of this new source of wealth, which poured into his treasury, he appointed him his confessor. The two handsome heretics, Ida and Sophia, became more bold; but the security they felt proved fatal to Ida, occasioning her to fall into the hands of Subinko, before she suspected herself to be in the least danger.

She

* "What a fine goose," was his saying, "that lays me so many golden eggs!"

She was one day returning home, deeply meditating on a private conversation she had just had with Hufs, which totally absorbed all her faculties. Undoubtedly Hufs was no prophet; but the great influence he possessed in various places, and the number of his adherents throughout Germany, procured him the knowledge of things with which others were unacquainted. He had been informed of the misfortune of count Everard; he was not ignorant, that Ida was his daughter; and he had that evening warned her to think of succouring the person in the world most dear to her, who was then at Ratisbon in the hands of his enemies. Hufs thought he had spoke with sufficient clearness; he was not aware, that, to a lovely young damsel, there might be another person as dear to her as her father, and that his mode of expression was precisely calculated to leave her in doubt.

In effect, Ida determined next day to ask a more direct explanation from the holy man; and she was walking slowly, and without fear, to the house of Munster, when she saw a number of armed men, who intercepted her passage. She perceived presently that she was the object of their pursuit; she cried for help; but it was too late. The young princess was conducted before the archbishop, who severely

verely reproached her with heresy, and condemned her to be confined in a convent in Hungary; a sentence which she heard with little emotion. She felt nothing but anxiety for her friends; an anxiety which considerably increased, when she reflected, that it would now be impossible for her to do any thing to save him, of whose danger, she had been informed.

Meanwhile the goodness of her heart, inspired her with a stratagem surely excusable under such circumstances. She corrupted one of her guards, by means of a valuable ring, to deliver to Sophia the letter we have mentioned above, which eventually afforded Herman an opportunity of liberating her father. She hoped, what actually happened, that her commission would be executed; and she departed for the place of her destination, with so much the greater pleasure, as it was that to which she would shortly have repaired of her own accord.

Ida felt no apprehension, that she was to remain eternally confined in the convent to which she was conducted; conceiving it impossible, that a punishment so severe should be inflicted on a person who had committed no crime. She reckoned, too, on the enjoyment of a certain degree of liberty in her destined abode; and the possibility of executing the commission with which she

was

was charged by duke Albert, as effectually as if she had arrived there under the protection of that prince. At all events, she was certain of one thing at least, namely, that she should be secure from the pursuits of the secret tribunal, which of all things in the world was what she most dreaded.

It may not be superfluous to acquaint the reader before we proceed, with the commission which duke Albert had entrusted to our heroine on her departure from Nuremberg. The duke had received from Herman, some traces of queen Mary of Hungary, first wife of Sigismund, being still alive, who had long been supposed to be dead; and the principal business of the princess of Wirtemberg was to inform Elizabeth of this circumstance, and endeavour to find out the convent in which her mother was confined. He had laid down a plan for her to pursue in this research, which we have already observed, was attended with difficulties: she was, therefore, disposed to act as chance should point out, or circumstances require. Besides, she thought it cruel to tell an unhappy daughter, that her mother was living, before she was certain of the fact; and thus inspire a mind of sensibility with anxious doubts respecting the fate of her to whom she was indebted for existence, without

without being able to give her any consolation. Ida well knew the solicitude of filial affection; and this motive, united with others, made her rejoice that she did not visit Hungary in the manner she had at first intended.

When the archbishop had pronounced her sentence. Ida asked permission to change her convent, if she found herself not pleased with that appointed for her retreat; which he readily granted, as he knew he could revoke the permission at pleasure. Such was the foundation on which she had erected her hopes. She trusted she should thus have it in her power to visit a variety of convents, without her design being suspected, and without her being exposed to any charge, but that of fickleness of disposition. If by these means she could discover the person she sought, she proposed to acquaint Elizabeth with her mother's existence, and the place of her retreat: duke Albert and his future bride, were then to come to liberate the queen, and of her who had discovered the place of her detention; and thus all was to end happily.

CHAPTER XX.

DURING a tedious journey, Ida had sufficient leisure to form projects, and feast herself with hopes, which however began to droop the first day of her arrival at the convent of St. Anne.

This convent was placed in a situation to which nature had been by no means kind. The lofty mountains, covered with thick forests of gloomy pines, with which it was surrounded, could cherish no sentiments but those of grief and melancholy. The deep and narrow valley, from the bottom of which rose the walls of the monastery, precluded all extent of view, and the heart seemed to shrink from the sad sterility that every where presented itself to the eye. Hence discontent and rancour sat brooding in every countenance; and wearisomeness and disgust pervaded equally the parlour and the chapel, the gallery and the garden, the cell and the hall of recreation.

Ida imagined herself in a few days perfectly acquainted with every inhabitant of this mournful abode; and was convinced, that here she should not find her of whom she was in search. This discovery would
have

have driven her at once from her melancholy asylum, had she not thought it decorous to stay at least a few weeks, in a place where she was treated with the greatest respect, and where she had no cause of complaint, but the tedium of her situation, a feeling which she shared in common with every nun.

The time which the prudent Ida thought proper to remain in this convent passed away, without her being able to find a single person in whom she could place sufficient confidence to open her heart. It was even impossible for her to obtain any satisfactory account of the neighbouring convents ; which would have been of some advantage to her in directing her choice, when she should make known her desire of changing her situation. All the intelligence she could obtain, was, that near them was a convent dedicated to St. Nicholas, which was, in a manner, dependant on that of St. Anne, and the patron of which was obliged annually to visit his superior saint.

The time of this ceremony was near. When the day arrived, the journeying saint appeared, attended by an escort of plump and fair damsels, who were sufficient contrasts to those to whom they were forced to pay homage. Their reception was by no means cordial. Whilst the two

abbesses, with the ancient matrons, held a chapter, the young nuns of St. Anne's formed themselves into parties from which they were so unpolite as to exclude those of St. Nicholas.

Ida, however, joined a party of the nuns of St. Nicholas. These young women pleased her much better than her present hosts, and she determined to take their convent for her next residence. The nuns, who penetrated her intention, and considered her as no insignificant acquisition, boasted of it, as a place which had always been an asylum for ladies of distinction. At present, it was the abode of a princess, Gara, who was formerly mistress of the household to queen Elizabeth of Hungary.

The nuns of St. Nicholas departed with their saint, and soon after, Ida declared her intention of residing at their convent. But she soon found the execution of her projects less easy than she had imagined. Numberless difficulties were started, and at last she was obliged to wait till the abbess had written to Prague for the assent of the archbishop of Subinko.

His answer was long in coming, but at length it arrived, and contained the desired permission. Ida found the adieus of the pious sisters sufficiently cold, which rendered

dered her reception at St. Nicholas the more agreeable.

Soon after her arrival, Ida introduced herself to the princess Gara. Her name was sufficient to ensure her a favourable reception from that lady, who in her youth had been intimate with her mother. Ida revived in the princess's mind a thousand pleasing recollections; her name, her figure, her person, recalled those of Ida of Dortmund, and these remembrances laid the foundation of a tender friendship, as far indeed as friendship could subsist between persons of so disproportionate an age.

The princess Rose Gara was a living chronicle of ancient times. She was never weary of talking over the events that had happened at the beginning of the reign of the princes now living, almost all of whom she personally knew. Ida's chief object in courting her acquaintance was to get information respecting the queen of Hungary, but this seemed to be the only point on which she chose not to be communicative.

Ida would probably never have succeeded in her attempt, but for a circumstance which threatened totally to exclude her from the confidence of the princess. Experiencing from her on a sudden, extreme coldness, she could not avoid urging her to an

an explanation. "Read this, and judge," said the old lady, putting into her hand a letter she had just received. Ida read as follows :

"My dear princess, the reports of Albert's infidelity are confirmed. How justly did you warn me to beware of the fate of my unhappy mother! You already know, that Albert has appeared for some months to have forgotten me; that a fair enchantress had gained his heart, and driven me from its possession. Now learn her name. It is Ida, the celebrated Ida of Wirtemberg, who, condemned by the secret tribunal, was protected at Nuremberg by Albert, and is now sent by him into Hungary, with a strong escort, there to wait a change in her situation, heaven knows, in what manner.

"I am indebted for this discovery to the person who gave me the first information, my intimate friend, the daughter of the princess of Ratibor. She, too, lost a lover by the artifice of that seductress. Grief and despair have driven her to this convent, which I fear will also be my last asylum.

"I wish to know more of my enemy. Imago's mother has promised me further accounts, and even the name of the place to which Ida is conducted. The
"princess

“princess of Ratibor has an extensive acquaintance, and great interest: she knows almost every thing that passes throughout the empire of Germany, and her information may be depended on.

“Malicious Ida, what have I done to thee, that thou shouldst deprive me of the affections of Albert? She is besides an heretic! She remains at present concealed at Prague; the queen visits her in secret; but the princess of Ratibor is endeavouring to separate them, and for that purpose means to draw on the odious Ida the attention of the archbishop. We shall see where this will end.

“My news from Prague is already old; sickness and sorrow prevented my communicating it earlier.

“ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY.”

It is possible that Ida's looks, on reading such an unexpected accusation, would have confirmed the suspicions of a person less sagacious than the princess Gara, but she had patience enough to wait for her answer, and then judge with impartiality.

Animated with the wish to remove this injurious imputation, Ida ingenuously recited the history of her acquaintance with the duke, his friendship for her, and the commission with which she was charged by him. When she had finished, she ran

to her chamber for the letter Albert had given her for Elizabeth, and which luckily she had in her pocket when she was carried off.

The princess read it. Ida could not have produced a stronger proof of her innocence. Every line spoke love to her to whom it was addressed, to the bearer nothing but friendship. It contained a circumstantial account of what Albert hoped to effectuate in Hungary by the assistance of Ida; the news of the existence of queen Mary; and schemes for discovering the place of her retreat; and concluded with a request to Elizabeth to protect their common friend the princess of Wirtemberg, and deliver her into the hands of no one but Herman of Unna.

The princess Gara was convinced. She embraced Ida, made an apology for her conduct, and begged leave to send the letter of duke Albert to Elizabeth in order to dispel her apprehensions and justify her supposed rival in her affections.

Ida readily complied, as she had now lost all desire of delivering the letter herself.

"This gentle, innocent, angelic princess," said she to herself, "is, however, prone to jealousy, and injustice. This mind, described to me as so elevated and sensible, is subject to error, and disposed to listen to the insinuations of malice. Poor Al-

"bert! Heaven grant thy union with her
"may be happy!"

Ida was wrong. In similar circumstances, she would have been guilty of the same faults with which she reproached Elizabeth, who was in reality good and amiable. She had forgotten, that she had herself been once intimate with the perfidious Imago, who was now poisoning the mind of the daughter of Mary.

CHAPTER XXI.

FROM the preceding event the intimacy between Ida and the princess Gara increased. Ida had no secrets for her respectable friend; and the princess, finding her questions were not prompted by idle curiosity, readily consented to satisfy her respecting the early part of the history of queen Mary, of whose existence, however, she still continued to entertain doubts.

"It is not without mingled sentiments
"of pleasure, and regret, said she, "that
"I recall to mind the first years of my
"youth, spent within these walls, which

“ now afford a retreat to, my old age.
“ Elizabeth, queen of Hungary, who seldom quitted her husband, and who
“ thought it dangerous to habituate her
“ daughter Mary too early to the bustle
“ of a court, chose this convent, for the
“ place of her education, and entrusted
“ to me the care of her infancy. I was
“ then of a proper age to become the governess of a child, to whom instruction
“ ought to be playfully conveyed, not administered with the ordinary severity of
“ school discipline. I had been six months
“ married, having espoused prince Stephen
“ Gara, to, whom my hand was given
“ merely that I might one day become
“ mistress of the royal household. The old
“ gentleman was obliged by his place to
“ attend constantly at court; and his young
“ wife regretted not in her pleasing retirement the honour of figuring by his
“ side.

“ Mary had few attendants; indeed
“ none beside myself, Ida of Dortmund,
“ your mother, and little Barbe of Tirnan.
“ From her infancy she gave no promise
“ of beauty; though, as she grew up, a
“ fine shape and dignified air in some
“ measure supplied its place. Barbe was
“ much handsomer; and I own I disliked
“ her for this advantage over my princess.
“ Better informed too, and more lively;
“ she

“ she had a thousand little talents that
“ Mary could never attain. I would gladly
“ have separated them; and, had I suc-
“ ceeded, I should probably have spared
“ my pupil many misfortunes, and her
“ companion a multitude of crimes.

“ Mary was the only child of king Lewis;
“ and consequently heiress to the throne;
“ and it was thought proper to strengthen
“ her right by a powerful alliance. With
“ this view she was betrothed, at the age
“ of nine years, to Sigismund, second son
“ of the emperor Charles IV. and only a
“ year or two older than herself.

“ Sigismund came to visit his future
“ bride. From his youth and rank he
“ could not be denied free admission into
“ the convent. Unfortunately he there
“ saw Barbe also, and, though so young;
“ could not avoid being extremely pleased
“ with her. This I observed, and took
“ care she should be removed from his
“ sight.

“ Sigismund came often to see us. He
“ was now no longer a child; he knew
“ how it became him to behave to her
“ who was one day to place the crown of
“ Hungary on his head; and the princess,
“ who began to love him, easily believed
“ all he said.

“ I saw however his attentions in a truer
“ light; and I frequently assured Mary it

“ was

" was not her he loved, but the heiress of
 " the Hungarian throne. ' Let us put him
 " to the test,' said she, ' and we shall see.'

" The king frequently visited his daugh-
 " ter, of whom he was so fond he could
 " refuse her nothing. Availing herself of
 " the power she had over him, she re-
 " quested a favour, which evinced less
 " prudence than predilection for Sigis-
 " mond, and which the king would un-
 " questionably have refused, had he not
 " been blinded by paternal affection.

" Her request was, that her father would
 " adopt Sigismund, and acknowledge him
 " for his successor. ' I will not be loved
 " by him,' said she, for the sake of a
 " crown. I would rather owe it to him,
 " than place it on his head. I believe
 " that he loves me; but I would have
 " others believe so, too, I would have it
 " said that, it is Mary, not the heiress of
 " Hungary, that he courts.'

" The king smiled, consented, and we
 " soon heard that he had adopted Sigis-
 " mond. The princess was delighted
 " with the pleasure she had procured her
 " lover. She expected a speedy visit from
 " him, and the warmest thanks. Yet Si-
 " gismund came not; but contented him-
 " self with sending a letter, which was a
 " political chef-d'œuvre.

" Mary was enchanted with it; but I
 " desired her to notice the name of sister,
 " which

“ which was foisted into almost every line.
“ I could not, however, make her imbibed
“ my suspicions, though they were soon
“ too plainly verified.

“ Barbe was now maid of honour to
“ queen Elizabeth, and her ripened charms
“ revived the inclination she had former-
“ ly excited in young Sigismund. This
“ was soon no secret, and the queen im-
“ mediately, though too late, sent for her
“ daughter to court, to repair the ill that
“ had been done in her absence.

“ The report of Mary's coming was
“ soon spread. Sigismund, finding his
“ intrigue with Barbe was remarked, and
“ that he should now be under some re-
“ straint, pretending urgent business in
“ Poland: and when Mary appeared in
“ the capital, she was met with joy by
“ every one, except by him for whom
“ alone she cared.

“ The loyal Hungarians celebrated the
“ arrival of their princess with enthusiasm,
“ and intreated the old king to have her
“ crowned whilst he was living, that no
“ one might dispute the throne with her
“ after his death.

“ The law which declared Sigismund
“ heir to the crown was not irrevocable:
“ The voice of the people, and the in-
“ treaties of the queen, to which mine
“ were

“ were added, prevailed; and Mary was
“ proclaimed queen of Hungary.

“ Sigismund was one of the first to con-
“ gratulate her. He even returned from
“ Poland to perform this duty in person.
“ Mary was no longer styled sister: he
“ was now not her brother, but her lover;
“ her future spouse. Had Mary followed
“ my advice, she would have dismissed
“ him as he deserved. But who does
“ not know the weakness of love? She
“ took care not to ascribe his return to the
“ crown she had just obtained, and loved
“ him more than ever.

“ ‘Do you not perceive,’ said she, ‘that
“ he is attached solely to me? Is there a
“ single lady of the court who can obtain
“ so much as a smile from him?’

“ Mary was right. Sigismund appear-
“ ed to have no eyes but for her; for
“ Barbe was not present. This woman
“ had heard that the beauties of Poland
“ had cured him of his passion for her;
“ and believing this she had consented, at
“ the earnest solicitations of her family,
“ and in order to retrieve her reputation,
“ to an honourable marriage. The per-
“ son destined for her husband, was John
“ Herwott, governor of Croatia, upon one
“ of whose estates she at this time actually
“ lived as his betrothed wife.

“ Meanwhile

“ Meanwhile Sigismund fought her
“ every where. She was the only person
“ for whom, after numerous infidelities,
“ he still retained an inclination. Her
“ absence therefore was insupportable to
“ him. At length hearing of her intended
“ marriage, he became dejected, and find-
“ ing it impossible to continue his dull
“ court to Mary, he resolved on a second
“ journey into Poland.

“ Lewis died, and Mary ascended the
“ throne. She would certainly have been
“ a good queen had she governed alone:
“ but there is a proverb which says:
“ where a woman reigns, men are sure
“ to hold the sceptre. The Garas had
“ the effective sway in the time of the late
“ king, and they maintained it under
“ Mary. Their oppressions provoked the
“ people to revolt: and Barbe prevailed
“ on John Herwott, to seize the queen
“ and her mother, and confine them in
“ his castle.

“ With this I acquainted Sigismund;
“ whom the Garas had prevented from re-
“ turning from Poland. He released Mary:
“ but Elizabeth had already fallen a sa-
“ crifice to this diabolical conspiracy. Her-
“ wott fell in the conflict; and Barbe was
“ sufficiently artful, to pretend, that she
“ too was a prisoner there, and indebted
“ to Sigismund for her deliverance.

“ Sigismund

" Sigismund was sufficiently powerful
 " to quell the mal-content, and re-esta-
 " blish Mary on the throne. She became
 " his wife; but from that time I never
 " saw a smile on her countenance. The
 " scenes that had passed in the castle of
 " Herwott were continually before her
 " eyes, and she was always repeating to
 " herself the name of her unfortunate mo-
 " ther. The grief which inwardly de-
 " voured her destroyed the remains of her
 " feeble attractions. Sigismund, to whom
 " sprightliness and gaiety alone were pleas-
 " ing, used to call her, to his confidential
 " friends, *moping melancholy*, without re-
 " flecting on the causes which had render-
 " ed that title applicable to her.

" Barbe appeared at court. Many sus-
 " fered it. It was necessary she should;
 " nor had she any objection; for she en-
 " tertained not of her those thoughts
 " which I concealed in my heart. Hea-
 " ven forgive me, if I impute to the
 " wretch more crimes than she commit-
 " ted!

" That the king's intrigue with Barbe
 " might be the better concealed, a match
 " was made up for her with count Peter
 " Cyly, surnamed the Weak. But the
 " motive became too apparent; and the
 " sorrows to which the queen had long
 " been a prey, added to the vexation at
 " having,

“ having so worthless a rival, induced her
“ to retire to a convent. She was at this
“ time pregnant, and her health was so
“ impaired, that apprehensions both for
“ her life and the child's were entertain-
“ ed. I accompanied her to this place;
“ where it was her wish to bring her in-
“ fant into the world, and die. It was
“ my firm resolve to be her only nurse,
“ and to trust to no one besides: but I
“ was taken dangerously ill, just as her
“ delivery was daily expected. The good
“ nuns of St. Nicholas saved my life; and
“ when I recovered, they did not conceal
“ from me, that they suspected I had been
“ poisoned. Possibly they were right:
“ the symptoms of my disorder were terri-
“ ble, and there were certainly persons
“ who felt no joy at my recovery.

“ My first care was to inquire after the
“ queen. They informed me that she was
“ dead; and this news had like to have
“ effected what sickness failed to accom-
“ plish. I asked the particulars. The
“ nuns could only tell me, that, on being
“ taken ill, the countess of Cyly had come
“ to supply my place, and that the queen
“ was removed to another convent, where
“ she was delivered of a daughter, whose
“ birth cost her her life.

“ The child was the next object of my
“ inquiry. Her mother, they told me,
“ had

“ had desired, on her death bed, that she
“ should be entrusted to my care ; and
“ the king had resolved to comply with
“ this, her last request, in spite of the re-
“ monstrances of the countess of Cyly. In
“ fact, I had soon the pleasure of folding
“ in my arms this precious legacy of my
“ unfortunate mistress. One of the nuns
“ of St. Anne’s had been commissioned to
“ deliver her to me with a letter, which I
“ opened, and read as follows :

“ *I am dying, my dear Gara : I have*
“ *only time to give the loved name of Eli-*
“ *zabeth to my child, and recommend her to*
“ *your care. The nun who writes these few*
“ *words for me will tell you more.*

“ I frequently asked after this nun, but
“ no one could tell me her name. The
“ suspicion, that the death of Mary might
“ be a pretence of Barbe, induced me to
“ make various researches, from which I
“ desisted not for many years. They have
“ ended in nothing ; judge, then, my dear
“ Ida, what may be expected from yours.”

“ And do you imagine,” said the prin-
cess of Wirtemberg, “ that your relation
“ has convinced me of the queen’s death ?
“ On the contrary my hopes are
“ greater than ever.”

“ I know not, my child, on what you
“ can found them. Elizabeth is now six-
“ teen years old. Is it possible, that her
“ mother

“ mother could have found no means of
“ acquainting her with her situation in all
“ that time? Consider too, my fruitless
“ researches: and remember, that Mary
“ was, at a dangerous period, entirely in
“ the hands of Barbe. Surely that remorseless woman would never suffer her
“ rival to live, when so favourable an opportunity of getting rid of her presented itself.”

“ How then came she to spare the
31 “ young princess, who was equally in her
“ power?”

“ If Mary had been delivered of a son,
“ no doubt Barbe would have taken care
“ of him: but a daughter was by no
“ means an equal obstacle to her ambitious projects. Perhaps, too, Sigismund
“ might have arrived earlier than he was
“ expected; or Barbe might have thought
“ of ingratiating herself with him, by
“ acting as a mother to her, instead of
“ me, whom she must have supposed
“ dead.”

“ It is difficult to form any judgment
“ on a business so involved in obscurity,”
- said Ida, with a pensive air; “ time, however, may yet clear it up.”

The princess Gara was silent. But, presently, to satisfy Ida, she gave her a more particular account of the infancy of Elizabeth.

The

The young princess, to whom, in conformity to her dying mother's request, she was to supply the place of a parent, was left in her charge but a few years. At an early period she was called to court, to be betrothed to the young Albert of Austria: as Sigismund found such a support necessary to prop his shaking credit. After Mary's death, the hearts of his subjects were greatly alienated from him. Barbe was obliged to quit the court, and retire to her husband's country seat. The king went to make a campaign against the Turks; and in the mean time sent his daughter to Klausenburg, Barbe having instilled into his mind suspicions concerning the princess Gara and the nuns of St. Nicholas.

The return of the king; his imprisonment: his amour with the princess Helen, at the castle of Soclos; his adventures at Cyly: and many other events, of which we have already given an account, succeeded, and were crowned by his marriage with Barbe, who thus became the step-mother of Elizabeth.

This union was fatal to the daughter of Mary. She was closely confined at Klausenburg; her hopes founded on duke Albert diminished; her heart became a prey to jealousy; and her mind was filled with a thousand disagreeable reflections. In fact, Albert had written to her less frequently,

quently, on account of the diet at Nuremberg, and perhaps too, because his attention had been much occupied by his friendship for Ida. The princess of Ratibor, whom some malevolent genius had conducted to Klausenburg, and thus brought acquainted with Elizabeth, had framed, with her mother's assistance, the calumny which Ida had so sensibly felt, and which had nearly deprived her of the friendship of the princess Gara.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE princess of Wirtemberg reflected seriously on what she heard, and ultimately resolved to employ the permission given her by the archbishop in continuing her search amongst the neighbouring convents.

Her first choice fell on St. Emery, a house which enjoyed the reputation of having formerly served as a prison to a queen of Hungary, and which she imagined might a second time have a claim to that distinction. That Mary was alive, and that a convent was her abode, she could not doubt, after what Herman had heard from the mouth of Barbe. On that she found
all

all her hopes were founded, and she promised herself in the end to execute the commission of duke Albert, and gratify her own wishes by the liberation of the imprisoned queen.

She expected no difficulty in departing from St. Nicholas, and was not a little surprised, when the superior, to whom she communicated her intention, informed her, that she must first acquaint the abbess of St. Anne, on whom she was dependent, and who had expressly enjoined her, under pain of being excommunicated by the archbishop, not to let the princess escape.

Thus was the poor Ida as much a captive here as in the melancholy convent of St. Anne, though her situation was not quite so disagreeable. The abbess sent for answer, that as the archbishop was soon expected in that district, the princess of Wirtemberg must wait his arrival, when she would have an opportunity of making her request to him in person.

We have yet given the reader no sketch of the character of Subinko; nor indeed is it of much importance. He was a little red faced old man, who had nothing of dignity about him, but the mitre that covered his thin grey locks; and had certainly never before been expected with impatience by a young and beautiful damsel. He was considered in his day as a pious
and

and learned man; though in fact he knew no virtues but the insignificant forms of a cloister, no learning but that of a monk. In short he was totally without morals, and equally devoid of every quality which renders youth amiable, or age respected.

At length this personage arrived at St. Nicholas, and was announced to the princess of Wirtemberg, before he had seen the superior. Ida received him with her natural gracefulness, and the pleasure occasioned by his arrival rendered her still more attracting.

"May I ask, sir," said she, the moment she saw him, "your permission to leave the convent of St. Nicholas?"

"Leave St. Nicholas!" answered he. "Are you not young lady somewhat too fickle in your disposition? This is already the second convent to which you have taken a dislike during your short abode in this country.—What would be the consequence if God had called you to a religious life, and it were necessary that you should pass all your days in one of these pious retreats?"

"Happily that is not the case:" replied Ida, with a smile.

"But supposing it was?"

The princess was alarmed. Such a supposition could not be indifferent to her.

"It is far from impossible," continued Subinko. The affairs of your prophet at Prague have taken a very bad turn. Our holy father had excommunicated him and his adherents. It was with difficulty he escaped the stake, at which I hope, by the grace of God, to see him one day expire."

Ida could not help shedding tears at the fate that threatened the venerable Huss, from whose mouth she had received so many useful lessons.

"Fire!" cried the archbishop: "Those tears are criminal, and render you doubly an heretic. Would you attempt to defend the errors of a man who causes such charming eyes to weep?"

"I can only hear, learn, and pity; I pretend not to defend: God alone is judge."

"Very well, my child: I perceive that you are mild and docile; your case is not desperate. Yet the fate reserved for the adherents of that heretic threatens you. The least punishment that can be inflicted on you is that of being immured in a convent for life; without having the liberty of changing every month. Probably that of St. Anne displeased you, because it's rules are too opposite to your worldly and sinful inclinations."

Ida

Ida began to weep afresh, clasping her hands with a suppliant air.

"Besides this," continued the archbishop, "there is a circumstance I scarcely dare mention, which cannot but render your situation worse. I am told, you are condemned by the secret tribunal. Is it possible, that, so young, so handsome, so innocent in appearance, you should be so enormous a sinner! Thus there seems scarcely any choice for you but death or a convent."

The archbishop perceived the alarms of Ida, and knew so well how to heighten her fears, that she fell at his feet to intreat him to save her.

"I believe you to be neither rigid nor cruel," said she. "Your eyes assure me, that you wish me well, and would be disposed to assist me if you could. Is there any thing impossible to the powerful Subinko? I ask only to fly, to hide myself till happier times. I could wish too, to inform Sophia, duke Albert, or my father, of my situation. Oh, do not abandon me! Once more bestow on me that paternal look which tells me that you wish not my ruin."

"And does it tell you so?" replied the prelate, with inexpressible joy. "Suppose I were now to assure you that it spoke

“ truth ; that I am come purposely to deliver you ; and that I was prejudiced in your favour the first moment of your being presented to me at Prague ?—You might easily have guessed this from the liberty I have permitted you to enjoy. No one else in your place would have obtained from me the same indulgence, particularly when accused of heresy.”

“ Ah confirm, then, my pleasing hopes !” said Ida, still on her knees. “ Let my father know where I am ; it is with him I should believe myself most in safety.”

“ Why should you go so far, my child, for succour ?” replied he, taking her by the hand. “ If you have need of a father, cannot I supply the place of one ? You see I am growing old though not so very old neither . . . but old enough to stand in need of a young and obliging governante. Are you willing to take upon you the office ? I am at present disengaged from all the fatiguing duties I had to fulfil at Prague. For the future I shall reside at my magnificent palace on the borders of the Danube. Come, and share with me, during the remainder of my life, the pleasures of that delightful retirement. You shall be my daughter, my friend ;
“ and,

“and, at my death, heiress of all my riches.”

Ida listened with great attention, without perfectly comprehending what she heard. To be the daughter, the governante, the friend of a good old man, and to await happier times under the protection of the pontiff of Hungary, were proposals not to be rejected by a mind free from suspicion: yet an internal sentiment, and the knowledge she had of the manners of the age, whispered, that the arrangement was not practicable. Besides, the familiarity of the prelate, and the manner in which he gazed on her, whilst she was at his knees, displeased her. She withdrew her hand from between his, and arose. She had already remained too long in that humiliating situation, which was perhaps pleasing to him, because it reduced her to a level with his own diminutive figure, and thus enabled him to contemplate her charms more at ease.

“You must not be offended, charming princess,” continued he, again taking her hand.

“A convent, if it must be so, will be the most suitable retreat for me, till better times. My rank”

“Speak not of your rank; we know you to be the princess of Wirtemberg: but history informs us, that persons of far

“superior station have not disdained the
“friendship of a bishop Think of
“Matilda, marchioness of Tuscany: she
“was proud of being the spiritual daughter
“of pope Gregory VII; and on that
“account is still venerated, though more
“than three centuries have elapsed since
“her death.”

The archbishop needed not have spoken more clearly, to let Ida into the knowledge of his designs. She stood petrified, her eyes cast down, without answering a word. Her face was by turns reddened with scarlet, and covered with a deadly paleness; whilst the holy prelate, all on fire, seemed to expect a favourite decision from her mouth.

“Matilda of Tuscany!” said Ida to herself: Horrible! I and Matilda!”

In those days, it is true, the story of Matilda and her only lover was not deemed as scandalous as it now is; though it was then appretiated with sufficient justice to be an object of detestation to every honest mind. Ida trembled: she repulsed the archbishop’s hands, which were continually endeavouring to lay hold of her’s; an involuntary tear stole from her eye; and she turned away from him in manifest disgust.

The amorous old prelate did not for this discontinue his solicitations; and Ida, driven

ven to the extreme, could scarcely forbear bursting into a rage, if it were possible that such a sentiment could have found place in so gentle a breast. Both, however, were highly displeased, and they parted with mutual asperity and threats.

CHAPTER XXIII.

“**W**HAT will become of me?” exclaimed Ida when she was alone: “heavens! what will become of me? The vengeance of this wretch will not fail to pursue me. Never, O never, shall I again see those I love.”

She repaired to the princess Gara to impart to her her unhappiness, and ask her advice. Her words expired on her lips. She blushed to acquaint another with the humiliating proposal that had been made her.

“The archbishop has been with you;” said the princess Gara: “did you observe no alteration in him?”

“I know too little of him to judge....”
“He appeared to be out of humour, dejected,

“ jected, absent Do you know the
 “ cause of it ? ”

Can he have had the assurance, thought Ida, to speak of what has passed between us ? and the blood flew to her face.

“ Yes,” continued the princess Gara,
 “ the abbess communicated to me the
 “ cause, but, under the strictest charge of
 “ secrecy. You are not ignorant of the
 “ disputes he has had with the new Bohe-
 “ mian preacher. Subinko carried matters
 “ so far, that Winceflaus at length was of-
 “ fended, and ordered him to be privately
 “ informed, no doubt at the instigation of
 “ Sophia, that his presence would be dis-
 “ pensed with. In fact, he is, as it were,
 “ deprived of his dignities in Bohemia.
 “ King Sigismond, it is true, protects him
 “ still ; and he will remain what he was in
 “ Hungary : but how long will that con-
 “ tinue ? ”

“ Can it be true ! ” said Ida, interrupt-
 ing her : “ is this unworthy being really
 “ deprived of all his authority ? And shall
 “ I have nothing to fear from him ? ”

Attributing the joy Ida manifested at the archbishop's fall, to former reasons she had to complain of him, the princess gave her a more circumstantial account of what appeared to afford her so much pleasure. During this narration, Ida found all her fears vanish ; and she resolved to avail her-
 self

self of her liberty to go the next day to St. Emery.

She communicated to the nuns her design; and they informed her, that the archbishop had ordered them if she persisted in it, to let her go.

The alarms of Ida respecting the conduct of her persecutors, were thus entirely dissipated. "The power of this wretch is so curtailed," said she to herself, "he dares not even oppose my wanderings. I will continue them, till I find what I seek, and then will be happy in spite of him, and of all the enemies of innocence.—It is true, I might repair to Italy to my father; or choose any other place, where I might think myself safe: but no, I will remain true to the point I have undertaken: I will first execute the commission of duke Albert, and then think of myself."

Ida departed. The journey to St. Emery was too long to be performed on foot, as the fair traveller wished, and a carriage was therefore procured her. She requested that one of the nuns might be permitted to accompany her; but she was told, that the archbishop had forbidden it. His authority is still great, thought the princess of Wirtemberg, as she descended the mountain, on which the convent was situated,
and

and entered the valley that separated it from St. Anne's.

At a distance she perceived armed men approaching. Their number, however, was small; and their peaceable appearance was little alarming. As they approached, she discovered, that they wore the same armour as she had noticed the day before on the attendants of the archbishop. A cold sweat seized her. If they had any designs on her, to escape was impossible.

One of the cavaliers, an elderly man, of a venerable appearance, came up to the carriage, and said, they were charged to escort her.

To escort me! Whither?

"To the place where you are going;
"to the convent.

"Is it indeed to the convent? I conjure
"you, my honest old friend, tell me the
"truth?"

"It is as true, as I pray God and the
"holy Virgin may be my protectors," replied he, putting his hand to his heart, with a devout air.

An honest open countenance generally removes distrust. Ida believed what he said, and was tranquillised. But she was not long deceived. The journey was sooner finished than she expected. The distance to St. Emery was considerable: yet she heard one of her conductors say,

"We

“ We shall soon be there : I see already
“ the walls of the convent.”

The princess put her head out of the carriage, and perceived the steeple of St. Anne’s. “ Whither are you carrying me ?” cried she.

“ To the convent of St. Anne’s ; as we
“ told you before.”

“ I am going to St. Emery’s.”

“ We had no orders for that.”

Ida attempted to leap out of the carriage. But the old man who first spoke to her, prevented her. She called him by the name of traitor, without reflecting, that she had not inquired to what convent they were going to conduct her.

The cavalier assured her, he had not deceived her intentionally. “ Why should
“ I ?” said he, “ Were you not in our
“ power ? And must you not have gone
“ whither we had orders to conduct you ?”

The princess drew back, and burst into tears. The carriage entered the gate of the convent. She was obliged to alight ; and found herself once more in a place which an abode of a few weeks had rendered so disagreeable, and which she could not now soon hope to quit.

She was conducted to the abbess.
“ Welcome princess,” said she : “ I find
“ our sisters of St. Nicholas have had the
“ same fortune as ourselves : you were

“ soon tired of them.—We, indeed, have
“ apparently the advantage : you visit us
“ a second time, whereas you have quitted
“ them for ever.”

“ For ever ? ” said Ida.

“ Yes : if I may believe the archbishop
“ —you are going to commence your no-
“ viciate with us. You will be permitted
“ to enter into our order, and share all
“ the rights and privileges we enjoy.”

“ I have no desire to embrace a religious
“ life, and in this convent less than any
“ where.”

“ Princess, you force me to say things,
“ that will not please you. Would you
“ have me openly declare, that you are
“ pursued by the secret tribunal ? And
“ that there is no safety for you but in a
“ convent ? None of our ladies will treat
“ you as a sister, if this be known. Per-
“ sons like you should be confined in
“ houses of correction. You may thank
“ the archbishop, who is desirous of sav-
“ ing you, for having kept it a secret, and
“ enjoined me to do the same ? yet, in
“ spite of these precautions, I fear you
“ will scarcely be secure even within the
“ walls of our holy habitation.”

To this Ida gave no answer but tears.
Ascribing them to repentance, the abbess
assured her of her protection, and gave
her her hand to kiss ; a proof that she al-
ready

ready considered her as of the number of those unfortunate beings subject to her religious sway.

History does not inform us, whether the princess acted according to etiquette on this occasion ; but we have great reason to doubt it. The misfortune to which she found herself at this moment obnoxious, was yet too new, for her to yield to what was expected of her, or consent voluntarily to humble herself before her despotic sovereign.

“ Ah !” said she, with a sigh, when she arrived in her cell : “ how could I be so
 “ weak as to believe, that an offence given
 “ an ecclesiastical prince would remain
 “ unrevenged ? How imprudent was I to
 “ quit those good nuns of St. Nicholas,
 “ to make myself a prisoner in a place like
 “ this ! There I should have been less ex-
 “ posed to the archbishop’s cruelty : there
 “ at least I should have had the princess
 “ Gara to witness my treatment, and be
 “ my adviser : and had I absolutely been
 “ obliged to embrace a religious life, my
 “ fate would have been infinitely more
 “ bearable in the convent of St. Nicholas,
 “ than in that of St. Anne. . . . How
 “ much do I regret, that I did not at least
 “ inform the princess Gara of the scene
 “ that took place between me and my per-
 “ secutor ! The knowledge of this would
 “ have

“ have rendered her attentive to my destiny, and made her perhaps suspect the truth, when she shall find that I am not at St. Emery.”

Thus complained Ida, till convinced that regret was no remedy for ills, and that patience and activity alone could enable her to surmount the calamity with which she was threatened.

Ida's situation was now far different from what it had formerly been. Before, she was treated with respect, had the best chamber in the house, and enjoyed every possible liberty. Now every thing was changed, every thing was poisoned by the reflection, that here she was to remain for ever.

Her sole consolation was the year of her noviciate, before the expiration of which she could not be constrained to pronounce the irrevocable vow. “ How many things,” said she, “ may happen in that period ! my life has already been so crowded with vicissitudes, that Providence may still perhaps bring about events which will produce a happy change in my lot.”—Hope, sweet blessing of heaven, how does thy presence, the instant thou approachest the unfortunate, comfort and relieve them ! Their sufferings become supportable, their chains appear light, they but half feel the troubles of

of the present moment, and they smile at the future.

Expecting deliverance, Ida resolved not to give way to sorrow and unavailing grief. The first six months of her noviciate were spent as usual in fertile, though tiresome practices ; when she heard with pleasure, that a task more fatiguing, and more mournful, though far nobler, was allotted her. She was appointed to attend the infirmary. To comfort the afflicted, and to weep with the unhappy, had ever been with her favourite employments. The insalubrious situation of St. Anne's rendered so many sick, that one nurse would scarcely suffice. Ida's care and attention, however, diminished the number, and patients were restored to the community, who had long been, as it were, buried in this noisome retreat.

The gratitude of those who were thus snatched from the jaws of death, was not the sole recompence of our heroine. She became acquainted with nuns she had never before seen, and who were, in many respects, the most estimable in the house. Afflicted, oppressed, abandoned, they went but too soon to inhabit the infirmary, where they respired impure air, and received bad aliment, whilst their companions in health, made a jest of their misfortunes, or saw their last moments approaching with the
most

most cruel unconcern. To recover them, Ida employed moral as well as physical remedies, and prepared them to support with more courage, the evils to which they were again to be exposed, evils that would cease but with their lives.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AMONGST the sick, whose number, thanks to the care and sympathetic kindness of our heroine, was now reduced to three or four; one remained, who from the first had particularly attracted her attention. She was extremely patient, and never complained. Her disease seemed incurable. It consisted in a total decay of the vital powers, a state of debility which old age produces; though the good nun had at most but reached the meridian of life. Her sufferings were not solely corporeal; her mind bore it's full share, but not, as she frequently confessed to Ida, in their moments of more familiar conversation, from fear of the future, to which she looked forward as promising her one continued day of serenity in the mansions of eternal

eternal peace ; but from sad remembrance of the past, the griefs and terrors of which were constantly recurring to her thoughts. Some words, which dropped from her, seemed to hint, that she had lost all she held dear in the world, and lost it in a cruel and extraordinary manner.

Ida could not help entertaining suspicions, though they were very slight, that this nun might possibly be the person she sought : but she could by no means get from her any particulars of her history, Conceiving, that the best means of exciting her confidence would be to relate her own, she seized the first opportunity that presented itself when they were alone together.

When she arrived at that part of her story where Herman related his adventures at the castle of Cyly, she observed the nun much affected. There were two persons, that figured conspicuously in her tale, whose names must make a forcible impression, if she were the person suspected. Burning, therefore, to developé this mystery, she continued her recital in the following terms :

“ I have already informed you, that it
“ was duke Albert of Austria, who took
“ me under his protection at Nuremberg;
“ and promised to obtain me protection
“ in a convent in Hungary. Into this
“ country

“ country I was brought, as you know,
“ in a manner very different from what I
“ expected. I have not however forgot-
“ ten the commission with which I was
“ charged. Ah, my dear sister! a com-
“ mission, on which the happiness of many
“ depends. Ought I to entrust it to you?
“ Yes, certainly, I may without dan-
“ ger.

“ Duke Albert I am astonished you
“ seem not to know it, is betrothed to an
“ amiable young princess. That princess
“ had a mother, who for sixteen years
“ was supposed to be dead, and of whose
“ existence the duke then for the first
“ time heard. Now it is my business to
“ find out this mother. Her name is Mary;
“ her daughter's Elizabeth.

“ Elizabeth! Mary!” exclaimed the
“ nun, in a tone more easily conceived
than described.

“ Elizabeth, daughter of king Sigis-
“ mond,” replied Ida; “ and Mary, the
“ unfortunate queen of Hungary.”

“ Unfortunate indeed!” cried the nun,
clasping her hands together. “ But you
“ talk of persons, who are no more.
“ Mary is dead; she must be so, and Eli-
“ zabeth . . . did she not die in her in-
“ fancy?”

“ Elizabeth!—O no: she is alive, heir-
“ ess to the kingdom of Hungary, and
“ betrothed.

“ betrothed to the noblest prince upon
“ earth.”

“ Impossible! impossible! Ah, would it
“ were true! How I could wish once
“ more to clasp the dear infant to my bo-
“ som!”

Ida now perceived as clearly as the reader, what they both probably have for some time suspected. Her heart beat with anxious joy: yet she concealed her emotion, and continued thus:

“ I wish with all my heart, I could im-
“ mediately introduce to you the princess,
“ of whom you seem so fond: but she re-
“ sides at some distance, in the convent of
“ Klausenburg. There is however one of
“ her friends in the neighbourhood, the
“ princess Gara.”

“ The princess Gara!—Visionary! She
“ too is dead. You know she died a little
“ after I—a little after Mary was deliver-
“ ed of Elizabeth.”

“ The princess Gara is living. She is
“ at St. Nicholas’s. I left her there when
“ I came to this convent.”

“ Gara living! My dear Gara living!—
“ and Elizabeth not dead!—What joy!—
“ No, no: it is impossible!”

As Mary uttered these words she fainted. The princess of Wirtemberg, kneeling by her side, endeavoured to recover her. August queen,” cried she, “ dear unhappy

“ Mary,

“ Mary, rouse yourself, days more fortunate await you.”

Mary opened her eyes; looked round her with an air of astonishment, asked new questions, could no longer conceal who she was, a hundred times desired Ida to assure her whether what she had said were really true; and at length convinced, she gave herself up to the most pleasing sensations.

This interesting discovery could not have been effected with more caution; yet were its consequences severe. The queen became dangerously ill. Ida wept by her bed side, and despaired of presenting her alive to her daughter.

The princess repaired to the abbess, and with much humility, a virtue to which she had been obliged to habituate herself, begged permission that Veronica, which was the name adopted by Mary when she took the veil, might be removed to St. Nicholas for the benefit of the air, hoping she might there recover more speedily, or at least die more at ease.

Her request was refused with some petulance; and she was asked, if her inclination for wandering were again returned.

“ I ask it not for myself,” said Ida, “ but for a sick person. Let me only have permission to attend her thither, deliver
“ her

" her into the hands of the nurses of the
 " infirmary of St. Nicholas, and acquaint
 " them how she ought to be treated ; I will
 " immediately return to St. Anne's, which
 " I humbly acknowledge as the place of my
 " destination."

The abbess did not seem to think the
 life of a nun worth so much attention. Ida
 remarked that Mary was not known here
 by her true name ; she durst not discover
 it, and she sorrowfully returned to her pa-
 tient.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE princess devoted herself entirely
 to the service of the unfortunate queen.
 They were humane enough in the convent
 not to disturb her in the exercise of her
 charity ; her novitiate drew towards an
 end ; she had behaved irreproachably dur-
 ing it ; and it was contrary to rule to begin
 anew to torment a candidate for the veil,
 when the time of her probation was nearly
 expired.

Day and night were Ida's thoughts em-
 ployed on means of alleviating the sorrows
 of

of the queen, and procuring her an interview with her daughter Elizabeth. All her hopes centred in the annual visits of the nuns of St. Nicholas to their elder sisters of St. Anne's, the time of which was not far distant. It was possible she might find amongst the visitors some nun to whom she could entrust a message for the princess Gara.

In the mean time her affectionate cares were not lost; and the queen began to recover. The princess of Wirtemberg kept up her spirits, by endeavouring to inspire her with the hopes she herself felt. Despondency gradually diminished. She had fancied she had lost every thing dear to her: already she had found something to make her in love with life: why should she not indulge this consolatory sentiment?

Ida had heard a considerable part of the queen's adventures from the princess Gara; yet the end of her story remained a mystery, which no one could explain to her but Mary herself. This from a person so feeble, she could not desire; it would be tearing open her yet bleeding wounds. She suffered not therefore her curiosity to escape her. It was observed, however; by the queen, whom she had inspired with the tenderest attachment.

"I perceive your wish, my dear Ida," said she one day, "and, heaven be praised,"
"ed,

“ed, I can gratify it, without giving my-
“self pain. You shall know all. I have
“committed it to writing. My pen was
“my sole consolation in this melancholy
“abode. To recite my griefs was an
“amusement; and I was willing to leave
“behind me the remembrance of my
“cruel sufferings, that my tears might
“not be wholly confounded with the
“fearful torrent of those that are inces-
“santly flowing on the world of misery,
“and that their traces might not be to-
“tally obliterated.”

“Where is this precious writing to be
“found, that contains the misfortunes of
“a saint?”

“There is but one place in this con-
“vent, held inviolate by malignant curio-
“sity. There have I concealed my journal,
“—The tomb covers my secret—Agree-
“ably to the custom of the convent, I
“have with my own hands digged my
“grave: frequently have I visited it: fre-
“quently have I watered it with my
“tears; and to it have I confided my
“sorrows. You will easily find the place.
“A cross, on which is inscribed the name
“of Veronica, will point it out to you,
“and the moon will enable you to disco-
“ver it.”

It was midnight, and every one was a-
sleep. Ida ran to the cemetery. With
eager curiosity she wandered amongst the

tombs.

tombs. It was some time before she discovered the grave of Veronica, which she had been too long in the infirmary to keep in order, and no friendly hand had undertaken that office. The earth had fallen in, the cross had tumbled down, and Ida would not have discovered it, had not she possessed sagacity enough to distinguish it by its disordered state. She replaced the cross, threw out the earth, found the journal, and was returning to the infirmary, when a noise at one end of the cemetery caught her attention.

In those days it was doubly meritorious for a young person to have courage to walk at midnight amongst the habitations of the dead. The persuasion, that the spirits of the departed continued to haunt those mansions where their mortal vesture was deposited, existed in full force. The pious Ida sincerely believed it: yet had she the courage not to fly. She hid herself under an old alder tree, close to the wall of the burying ground, and which scarcely exceeded it in height.

The leaves trembled over her head; and on the ground she perceived a shadow projected by the light of the moon. It was not the wind that shook the leaves; for the night was perfectly calm. Some words uttered in a low voice increased her fears. The trunk of the tree, against which she leaned,

leaned, received a violent shock, and at a small distance from her descended a human figure, large, and of a fearful aspect. Had she possessed the will she had no longer the power to fly. What she saw, and what she shortly after heard, bore so little analogy to the ideas she had formed of apparitions, that her fear was now of a nature totally different from that of ghosts.

“ This way,” said the figure, with a low voice, and looking to the top of the tree: “ Lay hold of that branch, and then leap boldly, and you will light safely where I am.”

Ida again perceived the same movement as before, and a second person descended.

“ You see,” said the first, “ that our enterprize is not impracticable. Let us now consider what is to be done. Observe those grated windows, where you perceive a light. They are those of the infirmary, in which, for some time past, she has almost constantly resided. They are not so high, but we”

The men were now gone too far for Ida to hear more. She would willingly have fled: but fear restrained her more than curiosity. To arrive at the gate of the convent, she must have passed these men, who appeared to have no good design. Under her tree she was safe, and there she remained.

At

At length the men returned. The face of one of them seemed not altogether unknown to her ; that of the other she could not see.

“ The safest way, no doubt,” said one of them, “ would be to acquaint her with your design : but how can we procure an interview with her ? ”

“ The feast of St. Nicholas,” said the other, “ is at hand. On that day the nuns have more liberty, and it will be possible perhaps to speak with her either in the garden, or in the cemetery. Yet why should we delay. The period of her taking the veil approaches, and there is no time to be lost, it will be prudent, therefore, to proceed immediately to action.”

Whilst they were thus talking, Ida recognized one of them for a cavalier belonging to the archbishop. The author of the stratagem was no longer a mystery to her. It appeared evident, that her old persecutor, deceived in his expectation, that the miserable life she led at St. Anne’s would induce her to comply with his desires, was unwilling to let things go too far, and chose rather to carry her off before she took the veil, than to lose her forever.

The men being gone to a distant part of the cemetery, Ida stole from her hiding place,

plate, reached the gate safely, shut it after her, and arrived almost breathless at the infirmary, where she found the queen uneasy at her long absence. This, however, was soon removed, when she appeared, bringing with her the journal, which fortunately she had not forgotten.

Much as she had pitied the unhappy queen, she was still more affected at her fate, when she reflected, that her last comfort was attempted to be ravished from her. What would have become of Mary, if her dear companion had that night been carried off, and she had expected her return in vain?

It was with difficulty the princess concealed from the queen her extreme agitation, under the appearance of the emotion excited by reading the journal. When Mary was asleep, Ida gave free scope to her reflections, and almost sunk under the dread of the danger which threatened them.

“ Oh !” said she, “ that the festival of St. Nicholas were past! Would that I had put the fate of Mary beyond the power of chance! As to myself, if other resources fail, the enunciation of my vow will at least give me security; and I would rather make this cloister my abode for ever, than become the Matilda of this detestable Gregory.”

Ida went to the window, to see whether the nocturnal visitants of the cemetery were yet gone. All was quiet. She observed, however, that it was not impracticable, with a little management, to carry off a person from that part of the convent. The windows were not high, the bars were in many places nearly eaten through with rust, and it was plain that the wall was no insurmountable barrier.

C H A P T E R XXVI.

THE remainder of the night was employed by the princess in considering what steps it would be most prudent to take. Day was no sooner broken, than she repaired to the abbess, to acquaint her with the events of the night, suppressing only certain circumstances, which the reader will be at no loss to conjecture, and the name of the archbishop, which she did not think proper to mention. She had not forgotten what she had heard the new Bohemian preacher say of the dissolute lives of the clergy, and the good understanding that secretly prevailed between the nuns and

and their ecclesiastical superiors. She knew not how far the designs she ascribed to the archbishop might succeed, and therefore she spoke only in general terms of what had happened.

Her reception was flattering. The abbess rejoiced, that Ida at length began to give proofs of her religious vocation; and exhorted her to persevere. Measures too were taken to repair the old wall; and it was thought proper to remove the nurse and her patient from the dangerous chamber they had hitherto inhabited, to one more convenient.

As the festival of St. Nicholas approached, Ida's agitation increased. The wished-for day at length arrived; the nuns made their appearance. Mary, who had acquired strength sufficient to go to her window, saw them come, and heard their song. "Go, my child," said she to the princess, "and lose no time; who knows how short the moments may be, that you will be able to dedicate to the emancipation of us both?"

Ida went. As a novice, she had supposed she should have been excluded from the assembly of the nuns, and should be obliged to seize for the execution of her project some moment offered by chance: in consequence, however, of the adventure of the cemetery, she was admitted to enjoy

the privileges of a professed nun. She had feared, too, that her residence in the convent would be kept secret, as she had been brought thither in some respect by force; but she soon discovered, that the votaries of St. Anne were vain of having seduced one of those of St. Nicholas, and proud of having inspired the worldly minded princess of Wirtemberg with an inclination for a monastic life.

News like this could not be very pleasing to the servants of St. Nicholas. Though, in other respects, good sort of girls, they were not wholly exempt from jealousy, which singularly prevails within the walls of a convent, where it springs and flourishes as in its native soil. Of course they envied their venerable sisters this conquest.

"I could not have thought this of you," said one of the principal nuns of St. Nicholas to Ida; "I could never have imagined that the princess of Wirtemberg would have preferred another convent to ours, had she been disposed to take the veil."

"Oh," answered Ida, "if you knew what has happened to me!"

The nun's countenance changed from the expression of discontent to that of compassion. She was about to ask some question; and Ida, who had no time to lose, was preparing

preparing to communicate to her those secrets with which her heart was oppressed, when a nun of St. Anne's came to interrupt the conversation. It was not judged prudent to permit the new sister to be much alone with the amiable seducers of St. Nicholas; and she was so carefully watched, that she feared she should have no opportunity of accomplishing her purpose. She escaped for a few moments to visit the queen; imparted to her her embarrassment, and a new scheme she had formed; obtained her consent; and returned to join the company.

"In the name of God," whispered the nun of St. Nicholas, who appeared to have waited for her in a corner of the cloister, "tell me by what means you were brought to this convent. The princess Gara and I have sought you every where, and this is the last place in which we should have expected to find you. How then, came you hither?"

"Almost by force," answered Ida. She would have said more, but she was instantly called by the abbess, and the conversation was again interrupted. During the frugal repast, when Ida was observed by a thousand eyes, the abbess delivered a public eulogy of the manner in which the new sister had voluntarily submitted to take the veil, of her conduct during her noviciate, and

and of her having herself discovered that a design was formed of stealing her from the convent. "I intreat you, my dear sisters," added she with an air of devotion, "to pray God and his saints to preserve her from temptation, and from every desire of returning to a corrupt world, till the time of her taking the habit, which we will fix for this day month, being the festival of saint Scholastica."

The nuns of St. Nicholas begged permission to assist at the ceremony. This appeared contrary to rule, and was refused.

Towards evening, however, the princess found an opportunity of saying a few words by stealth to her friend, the nun of St. Nicholas: "Tell the princess Gara," said she, "that I have discovered Mary, and that she expects speedy relief." The nun lifted her eyes to heaven with a look of astonishment.

"May I confide you in without danger?" added Ida.

The nun answered in the affirmative, with an air of frankness, and seemed to reproach her for doubting it.

"Take this writing then, and deliver it to the princess Gara. Recommend her above all things to be diligent. The queen is living: she is in this convent,
" but

“ but extremely weakened by a tedious
“ illness.”

Scarcely had the nun time to conceal in her bosom the journal of the queen, when a messenger from the abbess came to inform our novice, with a look of some dissatisfaction, that it was time to retire to her cell; adding, that she had made too free with the liberty allowed her, to be permitted longer to enjoy it.

Ida immediately retired to join Mary, to whom she gave an account of the success of her enterprize. They discoursed of nothing else till night was far advanced; they formed conjectures, expressed doubts, and gave way to fears, but ultimately cherished hopes, that heaven would prosper their virtuous endeavours.

The next day the abbess sent for the princess.

“ My daughter,” said she, “ we had
“ good reasons yesterday for wishing to
“ prevent all communication between you
“ and our dangerous sisters of St. Nicholas. It is not impossible but they may
“ be secretly in league with your persecu-
“ tors. Consider the culpable design they
“ manifested of assisting at your taking
“ the habit; and besides, sister Margaret
“ declares she saw the nun who last spoke
“ to you conceal in her bosom a paper;
“ probably a vile letter from one of your
“ friends.”

" friends in the great world, who wish-
" es to draw you anew into its pollu-
" tion."

Ida, fearing that Mary's journal had been discovered, blushed, and was so embarrassed that she could scarcely ask if any thing had been found upon the nun.

" No," replied the abbess, " we have
" found nothing; and indeed we should
" be sorry to pollute our hands with such
" profane writings. What I told you was
" mere conjecture . . . But tell me," added
the abbess, " for your change of colour
" looks suspicious, what did she say to
" you?"

" She . . . she . . . she . . . proposed to
" me to take a walk in the cemetery," said
Ida, trembling.

" I was right," replied the old lady.
" If you had complied you would have
" been lost for ever: for know, unhappy
" child, when Satan so eagerly pursues,
" that our walls are not too lofty for our
" enemies. Yesterday evening one of our
" sisters was seized by two men, and drag-
" ged towards a ladder which they had
" placed ready. Fear prevented her cry-
" ing out; but her veil falling off saved
" her. The sanctity and devotion im-
" printed on her countenance awed her
" ravishers.—It was certainly one of St.
" Anne's greatest miracles.—The mistake
" was

“ was, no doubt, fortunate for you, for
“ the falling off of your veil would by no
“ means have produced the same effect :
“ your countenance is yet too worldly to
“ inspire such respect. Do not, however,
“ be cast down ; age and rigid mortifica-
“ tions of the flesh may one day enable
“ you to enjoy the same advantages.”

Ida could scarcely refrain from laughter at this recital, and the reflections that accompanied it, notwithstanding the fear and sorrow with which her mind was agitated.

“ You see,” continued the abbess, “ we
“ begin to treat you with more confidence,
“ and to consider you already as one of
“ our sisters. I must inform you, there-
“ fore, that the snares laid for you be-
“ come daily more and more evident.
“ This morning two bars of the infirmary
“ window were found cut through with a
“ file. You must consequently be kept
“ more recluse, till the day when you
“ will triumph over the world. Be com-
“ forted, however ; our protector, the
“ archbishop, shall be informed of all,
“ who will take care that you shall be
“ safe.”

At the name of the archbishop, Ida clasped her hands together with an expression of the most lively terror. This action appeared highly edifying to the abbess,

who knew not it's true motive, and she dismissed our novice with extreme kindness.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE minds of Ida and Mary were agitated with fear and anxiety, in expectation of the effect that would be produced at St. Nicholas by the information they had sent thither. A long and melancholy week passed away, without the least gleam of hope appearing. At the end of it, however, Ida was sent for by the abbess.

“ Daughter,” said she, “ I have some very extraordinary news to impart to you. Your enemies, finding they cannot force you from your holy vocation by violence, have recourse to stratagem. But, praised be St. Anne, we are too mighty for them; and shall know how to frustrate their pernicious designs.”

Ida trembled at these words, and at perceiving in the hands of the abbess a writing to which the archbishop's seal was affixed.

“ It

“ It is now incontrovertibly demonstrated,” continued the abbess, “ that the nuns of St. Nicholas are of the number of those who have conspired against the salvation of your soul. This morning the princess Gara, who resides in that convent, sent us this order from our holy father, which we permit you with due respect to peruse.”

Ida took the paper as she was directed, that is to say, with a reverend genuflection, and read as follows :

“ Holy and devout mother in God, lady and abbess of the convent of St. Anne, we give you our benediction, and wish you all prosperity.”

“ In virtue of these presents you are ordered to deliver, without making any difficulty, into the hands of the nuns of St. Nicholas, your sisters, the reverend mother Veronica, who resides in your convent, and demands this change on account of her extreme weakness, and the young novice N. N. (called in the world by the name of Ida of Wirtemberg); which doing, you will fulfil our will.

“ SUBINKO, ARCHBISHOP.”

The :

The princess trembled with joy and fear, and returned the letter, without being able to utter a word.

“Your emotion, your silence,” resumed the abbess, “sufficiently evince your thoughts. But do not fear, my child; you shall remain with us. In this letter the holy father directs us what conduct to pursue. Observe these characters, unintelligible to every one except his holiness and myself, and which the nuns of St. Nicholas probably noticed as little as you. They acquaint us with his real intentions.”

Looking again at the letter, Ida perceived a line of small figures, which she had before regarded as one of the ornaments then in use. Her fear increased, and she was able only to cast upon the reverend mother a look of dread.

“You do not understand it,” said the old lady, bursting into a laugh. “I believe so. . . . These hieroglyphics signify, that Veronica may be delivered to the nuns without difficulty: but that the young novice N. N. whom his holiness designs to honour with his protection, must be detained under some plausible pretext.”

“Agreeably to this order, the sick nun, who has long been a burden to you; will be delivered in the course of the morning.”

“ morning to those whom the princess
“ may send. It is a matter of total indif-
“ ference, whether she be buried at St.
“ Nicholas’s or St. Anne’s. You, child,
“ will remain here, and patiently await
“ the day that will deliver you from all the
“ persecutions both of the world and the
“ devil. The approach of the moment
“ when you are to pronounce your vows is
“ a sufficient pretext for refusing your de-
“ parture.”

This terrible sentence affected Ida extremely. Her joy at the queen’s deliverance, sorrow at being separated from her, despair at seeing herself compelled to take the veil, agitated her so much, that her legs trembled under her, and she was ready to faint.

“ Why are you thus uneasy, my child ?”
said the abbess, rising to support her. You
“ see that your enemies will not succeed
“ in their designs. Let them take their
“ course: we will be an overmatch for
“ them or I am mistaken. Poor Veronica
“ is obviously a mere pretext to get you
“ into their hands. We will grant them,
“ what they falsely announce to be the
“ grand point of their demand; and we
“ will keep you, whom they would appear
“ to ask incidentally. Make yourself easy,
“ therefore: go and prepare for Veronica’s
“ departure; and then come and join me.
“ In

“ In the mean time I shall assemble the
“ whole community, to compliment you
“ as well as myself, on our having so hap-
“ pily extricated ourselves from this di-
“ lemma.”

Ida retired with weeping eyes, acquainted Mary with her deliverance, who could scarcely contain herself for joy, parted from her with many tears, warmly recommended her to the care of those who came to seek her, and, as she bade her adieu, begged her not wholly to forget her. If any thing could check the queen's happiness, it certainly was her inability to take with her the person who had effected it, and to participate with Ida the pleasure she was about to enjoy. She promised not to lose sight of her affairs, and quitted her with fervent expressions of her wish for their speedy re-union.

“ What will our sisters at St. Nicholas
“ say? and what our princess?” whispered secretly to Ida the persons sent to fetch her:
“ when we tell them you refuse to come to
“ their convent, and prefer remaining at
“ St. Anne's.”

“ Refuse!” said Ida. “ Oh! tell them
“ of my tears; my despair. They will
“ guess the rest.”

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SCARCELY could our heroine exert sufficient command over herself to receive with due civility the compliments of the jealous nuns: for here the least advantage was a matter of jealousy. As soon as possible she quitted the hall, and hastened to return to her cell, there to give a loose to her tears.

“ O Herman, Herman !” cried she :
“ didst thou know, that thy beloved was
“ on the brink of being torn from thee.
“ for ever !—And yet does it not seem as
“ if vice were more interested in my fate
“ than love ?—To deliver me the arch-
“ bishop has made attempts, on which
“ thou hast never once thought. He per-
“ haps will invent some means of pre-
“ venting my taking the veil, and get me
“ into his power : but thou Yet could
“ I pardon thee an action contrary to the
“ laws ? Should I follow thee, wert thou
“ now to present thyself before me ?—
“ Alas ! No.—Surely I do not in reality
“ desire to be emancipated from this
“ frightful captivity, or undoubtedly I
“ should have discovered some means of
“ breaking my chains, or at least have a-
“ vailed

“ veiled myself of those furnished me by
“ chance. But I want courage and reso-
“ lution.—O Herman, Herman!”

This name, so frequently invoked by Ida in her sorrow, will no doubt recall our knight to the remembrance of the reader. We have for some time amused his attention with events in some sort foreign to the chevalier of Unna : perhaps he has forgotten, that Herman is the hero of our story. Let us therefore return to his adventures, though, to do so, we must go back a whole year in our narrative.

It was with great regret he quitted Ratibon, to follow into Italy the count of Wirtemberg, whom he had liberated.

What would he not have given to have obtained some satisfactory news of Ida before his departure? But time to make inquiries was wanting. The count of Wirtemberg durst not, and would not, longer delay his journey. Paternal tenderness was far from inspiring him with so lively an interest in the fate of Ida, as love inspired Herman. Besides he had not yet wholly pardoned his daughter for her imprudence in introducing herself to the meeting of the secret tribunal ; an imprudence to which Ida owed her proscription, and her father his being compelled to quit Germany.

Neither

Neither had Herman any time to lose. He one day received a note containing only the following words. "Fly, Herman, the avengers are at thy heels!"

It was easy to guess the author of this billet, which was signed *Alexis of the Oaks*, a name that instantly recalled to Herman's memory the fair Alicia, and the adventure that befel him near the clump of oaks. In this advice, therefore, he readily discovered the friendly hand of Ulric of Senden.

"Adieu! Adieu! dear country that contains all I love!" cried Herman, as he quitted the confines of Germany. "Shall I ever behold thee again? Alas! my blood will probably be spilt on some foreign land, where no one will bestow a tear on my corse. My ashes, collected by no friendly hand, will be scattered by the wind: and what will become of Ida?"

Herman, however, arrived safe at the camp of the Teutonic Knights. His name was a sufficient recommendation, and ensured him a flattering reception. He was informed, that amongst the knights was a person, whom they supposed to be related to him, as his name was John of Unna. He was one of the grand crosses of the order. His heart beat at this intelligence; but he said nothing. He was introduced to

to this officer. The two brothers recognized each other, and embraced.

"It was you whom I sought here," said Herman: "it was you alone by whom I was drawn hither. How happy to find you so soon!"

John affectionately embraced him again; The little Herman, for such he was when he last saw him, had always been more loved by him than any of his brothers; in like manner as to their sisters; he had preferred Agnes and Petronilla. A thousand questions concerning the family were put to Herman, who was not tardy in his answers. The recital of his adventures was reserved for a private conversation the next day. Of these the Teutonic Knights appeared to be perfectly ignorant.

Herman felt much respect for his brother John, whose situation and manners tended equally to inspire it. He asked Herman what induced him to leave Germany. This might have been fully answered in seven words: "I am pursued by the secret tribunal:" but Herman could not venture to render himself suspected by his brother at first sight. He answered, therefore, still more shortly: "my misfortunes."

John, without inquiring into particulars, and supposing misfortune had inspired his brother with a wish to take the habit
of

of the order, contented himself with promising him advancement by way of consoling him.

To this Herman answered nothing. The brothers parted. For the mutual relation of their adventures, the next day had been fixed, and the whole of the night was spent by Herman in considering how he should arrange the long series of events that had befallen him, so as to leave on his brother's mind no doubt of his innocence. He was not ignorant, that the simplest tale is always the best, as bearing the stamp of ingenuousness; but he had too often had the misfortune to have his actions misconstrued by those he loved not to have become timid.

In the mean time, both his hopes of happiness, founded on the conversation he was to have with his brother, and his anxiety to maintain a place in his esteem, soon vanished. The moment he was preparing to quit his tent, in order to wait on him, he received information, that John had suddenly set off on business of emergency; and that all he had been able to do before his departure, had been to recommend him to the grand master.

To the grand master, whose name was Ulric of Jungingen, he was accordingly introduced, and met a favourable reception. Supposing him desirous of wearing the

the cross, he was informed of the conditions on which it was to be obtained. In those days, it was still more difficult to be admitted a knight of the Teutonic Order, than even at present.

Herman saw without regret this favour deferred, which at bottom he did not desire. It was enough for him to have obtained permission to share, in some measure, the glorious achievements of the order, by serving under its standard: and he resolved by his conduct to prevent, at least, any prejudice in his disfavour, if, what he so carefully concealed, should be discovered.

Our manuscript does not mention the actions at which our hero was present during the seven months he served in this army: it says only, that on all occasions he behaved with prudence and courage; that from accidental circumstances he became extremely intimate with the two Jungings, the one actual, the other late grand master: that the famous Henry Huf, formerly deposed, appeared not to be unfriendly to him: and that there was every reason to believe he would soon have had nothing to oppose his admission into the order, when an event arrived, which at once deprived him of the safety he enjoyed amongst the Teutonic Knights, and threw him

him again on a stormy sea, on which he was like to have perished.

Amongst the candidate knights, Herman made acquaintance with a man, for whom he felt himself singularly interested. He was a stern unpolished soldier, whose countenance appeared to have been roughened by misfortune. He was silent and reserved to every one but Herman, who had more than once saved his life in battle, employed his interest with the grand master to procure him justice against the cabals of his enemies, seemed to attach himself to him for the same reasons which led others to avoid him, and sought his society because he was unhappy.

Naturally inclined to console the afflicted, Herman had long endeavoured to discover the cause of this knight's sorrows, that he might apply the balm of comfort to his wounds. At last accident effected a mutual confidence.

The friend of Herman revealed to him his name. He was Conrad of Langen, brother to the fair Alicia, who, pursued by the secret tribunal, here found a kind of asylum. The remembrance of his sister, and the resemblance of their destiny, increased Herman's attachment to him. He embraced him affectionately, called him his brother, informed him of the alliance that had taken place between their families, and promised

to acquaint him without delay with the events of his life.

Herman kept his word, and related his adventures with as much frankness as he would have done to his brother the commander. Conrad, also, not withheld by the fear of a rigid censor, concealed not the least circumstance of his own. His history proved, that he was far from not having committed any of the crimes for which he was pursued by the secret tribunal: whereas Herman, perfectly innocent, might boldly present himself and say, I am free from guilt.

Conrad, after Herman had finished his tale, was for a while silent. "You are more innocent than I," said he, at length: "your affair is not to be compared with mine; yet is our fate nearly the same. Might not one be tempted almost to renounce virtue, when we consider, that it is frequently as obnoxious to misfortune as vice? The best thing we can do, however, is to quit this country, before the rigid Teutonic knights shall know our situation. Their eyes ultimately penetrate every thing: they are nearly as clear-sighted as our enemies the free judges. Do not hope to be admitted into their order, without a strict inquiry being made into your conduct: and, if they learn the motives of your arrival
" here,

“ here, expect to be judged with severity,
“ for their delicacy is so great, that with
“ them an accusation is as great a blot as a
“ demonstrated crime.”

“ Does Conrad think then,” replied
Herman, “ that I am desirous of obtaining
“ the cross of the order?”

“ I supposed so, because I imagined,
“ that we, whose fate is so similar, might
“ seek the same resources.”

“ You design, then, to fix yourself
“ here?”

“ Before I answer your question, hear
“ the part of my adventures which is un-
“ known to you. When the persecution
“ of the free judges constrained me to
“ quit my castle, and leave an unfortunate
“ sister without protection, fortune offered
“ me, in the midst of my afflictions, a
“ treasure, which she frequently refuses to
“ her greatest favourites: I mean a faith-
“ ful friend. . . . My deliverer, my dear
“ John of Unna appeared, and saved me
“ from despair, which was urging me to
“ put an end to my days, and thus con-
“ sign myself, laden with sins, to eternal
“ perdition.”

“ John of Unna! my brother?”

“ Yes, he! Anxiety and watching had
“ exhausted my strength. I was scarcely
“ three miles from my castle, when sleep
“ began to overpower me. It was neces-
“ sary

“fary that I should continue my way, or
“lose all hope of escape. I reached a
“wood, that, in happier days, had often
“lent me it’s friendly shade under which
“to enjoy the pleasures of repose after fa-
“tigue. I knew, if I went farther, I
“should find an open country for many
“miles, where I must sleep in the face of
“day, unsheltered by a single tree. It is
“true there were villages and inns: but
“under what roof could a traveller like me
“sleep securely?

“I lay down, therefore, under the first
“tree, and fell asleep. How long I slept,
“I know not; but when I awoke, the first
“object that met my eyes was a man with
“a drawn sword. Instantly I arose, and
“put myself into a posture of defence.
“My enemy was the strongest, and I was
“on the point of being overpowered,
“when a cavalier came up, and immedi-
“ately undertook my defence. This was
“your brother, John of Unna. He had
“never before seen me: but to find a man
“in distress was sufficient inducement with
“him to go to his assistance.

“My antagonist was soon obliged to quit
“the field to our united forces. I thanked
“your brother, as my guardian angel: we
“embraced; we told each other our
“names; and mine, though the name of
“one condemned by the secret tribunal,
“for

“ for I was known so to be all over the
 “ country, did not incite him to withdraw
 “ from me his friendship.

“ He treated me as a brother, and sat
 “ down by my side. . . . ‘ I, too, am a fu-
 “ ‘ gitive,’ said he: ‘ I am fleeing from my
 “ kindred, who would compel me to em-
 “ brace a way of life to which I have an in-
 “ vincible repugnance. Let us repair,
 “ then, my friend, to join the Teutonic
 “ Knights. Their order may protect us
 “ from violence, and lead us some day to
 “ honour.’ . . . I struck hands with him,
 “ assuring him, that I would follow him
 “ any where, and we reposed on the grass
 “ to make a slight repast on the provision
 “ your brother had in his portmanteau.
 “ We drank out of the neighbouring
 “ brook: we formed projects for our fu-
 “ ture lives; and dreamt not of the danger
 “ that might frustrate them. . . . To that
 “ danger, the danger of death, we had
 “ nearly fallen victims. The innocent was
 “ obliged to share in it, because he associ-
 “ ated with the guilty. The foe, from
 “ whom John had delivered me, appeared
 “ anew, bringing with him a companion,
 “ that he might engage us on even terms. In
 “ an instant we were on our feet. Our
 “ sabres, by an unpardonable negligence,
 “ we had left at some distance on the
 “ grass; so that we had no weapons but

“ the knives with which we were eating.”

“ The combat was very unequal, though one of our antagonists, he who the first had brought with him, seemed to fight with reluctance. No doubt it was Ulric of Senden, the lover of Alicia, who was forced to draw his sword against his mistress's brother. He carefully avoided wounding me, and soon turned from me to my second, who, unable to stand long against an enemy armed with a sword, was obliged to betake himself to flight. I was then easily taken prisoner by the other, who led me to Osnabruck. I know not what prevented him from taking my life on the spot. From my prison I found means to escape, and thus avoided the disgrace of an ignominious death. Immediately I repaired to the place where I conjectured I should find my friend, John of Unna. Already was he decorated with the cross of the Teutonic Order. Being now better acquainted with the statutes of the order, than when we first met, he knew it would be impossible for me to obtain it, and he advised me to relinquish my projects, and thus avoid the strict scrutiny that would be made into my actions. By his advice, also, I changed my name: my real one would have exposed me to

I “ the

“ the greatest dangers. My misfortune
 “ was not, like yours, involved in ob-
 “ scurity : it would have been over with
 “ me, were I once known to be Conrad of
 “ Langen.

“ Your noble brother could not serve
 “ me as he wished ; yet, notwithstanding
 “ the circumstances that tied his hands, he
 “ did much in my favour. To him am I
 “ indebted for life, for honour, for the
 “ means of subsistence ; nay, more, for
 “ the opportunity of signaling myself by
 “ glorious deeds ! and, perhaps, it will not
 “ be impossible, by continuing to distinguish
 “ myself, to efface the remembrance of my
 “ past life.

“ Some business of the order having call-
 “ ed your brother away, I could certainly
 “ not have remained here without a pro-
 “ tector. In that respect you have suppli-
 “ ed his place ; and whilst your adventures
 “ remain unknown, your name and repu-
 “ tation will support me. But, Oh ! what
 “ a man is your brother ! How great and
 “ noble a character ! . . . Friend of the
 “ oppressed, whom the whole world re-
 “ jects ! . . . A faithful guide, who has led
 “ me into the path of virtue ! Can I ever
 “ repay what I owe him ? Surely, no : my
 “ life would be too little to compensate
 “ such benefits.”

At these words Conrad melted into tears. Herman closely embraced him, and they consulted together what course they should pursue; but fortune sparing them the trouble of carrying it into execution, the result of their deliberation has never reached us.

CHAPTER XXIX.

OUR two knights should have been more cautious in their discourse. They lived in a country, where neither darkness nor retirement could secure them from treachery. Their bravery, the respect shewn them by the grand master and the rest of the knights, the supposition that they were both candidates for the cross, and that it could not be refused them, had excited envy. Their ruin was sought; their steps were watched; and it was matter of exultation to their enemies, that their imprudence had disclosed things, which must cover them with confusion, and drive them from a place where their presence was unwelcome.

The

The grand master was informed of what Herman and Conrad had entrusted to each other under the veil of night. Henry Reufs was at bottom no great friend to the knight of fidelity; and these two unfortunate victims of secret vengeance would have been treated with severity, and particularly Herman, the most innocent of the two, had not the count of Wirtemberg interfered.

The count and Herman had, since their arrival, always resided together. They had both fought under the standard of the Teutonic Knights. The former had thus a thousand opportunities of becoming acquainted with the heroic qualities of our young hero, and began to be greatly attached to him whom he had once so much hated. Independently of the liberation of the count of Ratibon, Herman had frequently rendered him essential services.

The count was grateful, and pleaded Herman's cause with ardour. Probably he would have been completely justified, had not the count of Wirtemberg himself lived in a kind of banishment, which was not completely done away till at least a month after, and which, for the present, considerably abated the influence of his mediation.

The terrible tribunal, which pursued Herman and Conrad, had ministers every where.

where. No sooner was their situation known, than numbers of secret avengers prepared to execute the sentence pronounced against them. Neither the grand master nor the count could save them from this peril. The only favour the latter could obtain, in consequence of the authority he had formerly enjoyed in that society, and which he was shortly to resume, was that Herman should be conducted in safety to Westphalia, to his uncle, the old count of Unna, who, he had every reason to believe, would protect and favour him, even if he could not procure him justice.

The hopes of count Everard were not without foundation. A report prevailed, that some trace of the murderers of duke Frederic were discovered; that one of them, named Falkenberg, was already in the hands of justice; and that through him there was no doubt but the rest of the accomplices would be found out and arrested.

“Go, my son,” said the count to Herman; “if you have not deceived me, if you can completely justify yourself from having borne a part in that infamous crime, and appear as innocent in the eyes of the public as in mine, I promise you the accomplishment of your dearest wishes.”

“What,

“What, that Ida shall be mine?” asked the youth, transported with joy, and throwing himself at count Everard’s feet.

“Softly, softly,” said the old count, who seemed to regret in some measure what he had just said. “You ask too much. A knight of Unna, and a princess of Wirtemberg, would be a match too disproportionate. If, however, the count of Unna fulfil his promise, and adopt you for his son . . . then perhaps I should not be so unjust as to refuse my daughter to the heir of so great a name, to the son too of my ancient friend.”

A smile was on the lips of Everard, as he pronounced the last words. Herman fell at his knees a second time. “She is mine, then,” cried he; “she is mine! O, my father, how shall I thank you?”

“Extravagance of youth! where are the proofs of your innocence? Who can say whether your uncle will keep his word? And, indeed, where is Ida herself, whom one would suppose you had already in your arms?”

“Ida! Ah! were she at the extremity of the globe, were she in hell itself, I would go thither in quest of her. But she is in a convent in Hungary, as I am given to understand by a letter she has written to the queen of Bohemia. I will visit every monastery in the kingdom; I will spare

“ spare neither prayers nor threats ; I will
“ be prodigal of bribes ; I will employ
“ force, if necessary, till I have disco-
“ vered her, and brought her with me
“ to your feet, there to receive your bene-
“ diction.”

The count shook his head. Things that seem easy to youth appear far otherwise to the experience of age. Herman informed Everard, that his daughter had been exposed to the sword of the secret tribunal, and that nothing could have saved her but her abode in Hungary, where she was sheltered from it's pursuit. “ And will not the return of her father, re-established in his rights,” added Herman, “ necessarily produce the justification of Ida? No, my lord, you will not succeed in weakening my hopes ; be you but favourably disposed towards me, and I fear not the whole world.”

Everard and Herman parted ; the former tolerably content, the latter perfectly enchanted. The count had once formed greater plans for his daughter. To see her duchess of Brunswic, and perhaps empress, would, unquestionably, have been more flattering to his pride, than the title of countess of Unna ; but he had already found himself obliged to abate something of his pretensions.

The

The emperor, Robert, was firmly established on the throne, which the count once thought himself on the point of ascending. There was no appearance of the German princes making another choice. Every thing was so arranged, that, on his death, the imperial crown could not fail of descending to king Sigismund, whose successor, duke Albert of Austria, was too powerful to be supplanted by another: and what probability was there, that an old man, like count Everard, should survive the youthful Albert?

CHAPTER XXX.

HERMAN of Unna and Conrad of Langen were both delivered into the hands of their persecutors. The former was treated with much indulgence, no doubt because he was supposed to be innocent; and the latter, though charged with numerous crimes, in some degree participated the treatment of his friend.

Langen probably knew his situation better than did those who were appointed to conduct him before his judges. He knew,

that the moment he arrived at the place of his destination, all the ancient accusations against him would be renewed, particularly that relating to the bishop of Osnabruck. He knew, that he had no resource but flight, and this had so often succeeded with him, that he flattered himself it would not fail. Fertile in stratagems, and not very scrupulous in the means he employed, he accomplished his design. One evening he embraced his friend with great emotion, spoke of the pleasure of meeting after a long separation, and . . . the next morning he was not to be found. Strict search was made after him; but to no purpose: no one could discover what was become of him.

Herman regretted his departure, yet rejoiced that he had recovered his liberty. Lest he should be inclined to follow Conrad's example, he was himself watched more strictly. Superfluous precaution! Conrad had often urged him to betake himself to flight, and he had as often refused. Why should he have fled? His conscience was clear; the judge to whom he was to be conducted was his relation, his friend: and in most places through which he passed rumours prevailed, that gave him hopes of being completely justified. Of these his guards made no secret: for one day he was informed by
them,

them, that Falkenberg, the known assassin of the duke of Brunswic, had denounced, as his accomplices, Werner of Hautstein, and Henry count of Waldeck, both, as well as himself, in the service of the elector of Mentz. Hence it was easy to divine on whom the suspicion must fall; and as to Herman he was no way accused.

He rejoiced at these striking proofs of his innocence. His guards were insensible of them; and they proposed to leave him at liberty to go where he pleased. The loyal knight smiled at this proposal. *Innocence never flies*, said he once more, and calmly suffered himself to be conducted to the castle of his uncle, the old count of Unna.

It was not as a prisoner, but as a friend, that Herman was conducted to the house of his relation, who received him with open arms. "What, already arrived to enjoy your triumph?" cried the count, as he saw him entering. "I have but just written to Italy, to inform you of the manner in which the truth has been discovered: is it possible the news can have reached you so soon?"

The young knight acquainted his uncle with the circumstances that occasioned his return.

"I am happy to assure you," replied the count, "that the manner in which you
" have

“ have been thus brought to meet your
“ justification is the last trouble you will
“ experience from a crime in which you
“ had no share. Hautstein, Falkenberg,
“ and Waldeck were the accomplices of
“ Hertingshausen, and perpetrators of the
“ deed. None of them accuse you : they all
“ declare on the contrary, that they knew
“ not your name, except by having heard
“ Hertingshausen, when intoxicated, say
“ you were his enemy, and swear he
“ would be avenged of you, should it cost
“ him his happiness here and hereafter.
“ It is not surprizing, therefore, that his
“ malignant disposition suggested to him,
“ on his meeting you near Fritzlar, to ac-
“ cuse you of the crime for which he suf-
“ fered. In this accusation he persisted
“ to the last ; and hence sprung all your
“ misfortunes.”

Horror seized Herman when he heard a circumstantial relation of the conspiracy, to which duke Frederic fell a victim. He trembled when the names were repeated, of those who were concerned in the crime.

.... “ Well, and what is the punishment
“ of those murderers ?” said he with eagerness ?

“ A fine !” answered the count, shrugging up his shoulders : “ a fine only !”

“ A fine !” and I was to be put to death
“ merely on suspicion !”

“ They

"They are princes," replied the count :
"you are only Herman of Unna."

The old count had a long conversation with his nephew on this event : and, Herman, on his part, related his adventures amongst the Teutonic Knights, and the promise made him by the count of Wirtemberg. As much as the latter part of his narrative pleased his uncle, so much did he appear displeased with the former ; and Herman was obliged to undergo a strict examination on the manner in which he had lived with his brother John. The count of Unna's hatred to the younger branch of his family was inextinguishable : and nothing could have preserved his nephew from the displeasure of the old gentleman, but the assurance which he gave him, with truth, that he had spoken to his brother but once.

"And what is his situation there ?" asked the count. "No very respectable one, I presume."

"He is grand cross, and has a commandery."

"Ah indeed ! I know then to what he owes his advancement : not to his services : but to the expectation that, after my death, he will be count of Unna. Yet I shall deceive them. This John, and the vain glorious Bernard . . . But they are right ; as I have no child, your
"family,

“ family, or the empire, must be my heir.
“ Patience, however! I will choose one
“ they least expect; the youngest, the
“ most despised of them all; him whom
“ they thought to bury in the dust of a
“ cloister, in order to raise themselves at
“ his expence.”

During this speech the old man's anger kindled into a flame. With a tone of asperity he ordered Herman to withdraw, who knew not what to think, till an ancient domestic of the house, whose probity he had discovered on his first visit to Unna, told him that the count, having been attacked with a dangerous disease, a few months before Herman's arrival, Bernard of Unna, and the abbess of Marienhagen had talked so publicly of their expectations, that it reached his ears, and confirmed him in the resolution he had formed in favour of Herman.

The wrath of the count soon subsided, and the day on which Herman was solemnly proclaimed innocent of the crime of which he had been accused, he adopted him for his son, and declared him his heir. Herman's gratitude for such a benefit, of which no one more fully felt the importance, sensibly affected the old man: he thought he observed in the eyes of his nephew nothing but the astonishment excited by an extraordinary favour to which he
had

had no pretension; and this extremely pleased him.

Neither was the count much mistaken. It is true Herman expected what he had just obtained: his uncle's promise had given him the idea; and his conversation with the count of Wirtemberg, had recalled it to his memory: yet was he not less surprised, to find himself thus suddenly at the summit of his hopes. He knew, that he was indebted for it to no claim of right, but solely to the kindness of his uncle: and to see the foundations of his happiness, of which his generous relation knew not all the extent, thus securely laid, excited in him the most lively effusions of gratitude.

"Yes, thou art my son, my only son," cried he, pressing Herman to his bosom. "All the world shall know how much I love thee. I am proud of thee, and by the splendour with which I will equip thee, I will humiliate those who envy thee, and who so eagerly expected my death."

There appeared in these words something mysterious: but Herman soon understood their meaning. The count gave him notice to prepare the next day to visit his brothers and sisters, attended by a magnificent retinue. This news afflicted his good and gentle heart. What pleasure indeed could he feel, at being thus sent
merely

merely to brave his family? He submitted, however, to his uncle's will; after having prevailed on him, by dint of intreaties, to omit what would too sensibly have wounded the pride of his relations.

Agnes and Petronilla were delighted to see him, and sincerely participated his happiness. Ulric also threw himself into his arms transported with joy. The abbess and the canons made him a thousand pious compliments; whilst the ill-dissembled jealousy of Bernard and Catherine were visible in their eyes. Herman, however, strove to satisfy them all by his politeness and sincere expressions of friendship; but to none did he give so much pleasure as to his sister-in-law Alicia, to whom he brought news of her brother.

Conrad had reached Hungary without the least accident. The king received him into his service, though he concealed not from him ought respecting his situation. Sigismund was not more nice in the choice of his servants than of his mistresses; and his queen Barbe saw with pleasure her court increased by the addition of a famous knight, of whom she hoped in time to make a conquest.

Agreeable as the society of Ulric and Alicia, of Agnes and Petronilla, was to Herman, he could not long remain with them. A passion far stronger than friendship,

ship, his love for Ida, the desire of discovering her asylum, and his anxiety for her fate, soon tore him from the arms of his family.

His uncle, informed of his love and his hopes, had given him leave to depart in quest of the princess. Borne on the wings of love, he arrived at Prague, hoping that the queen would acquaint him with the place of Ida's abode : but Sophia was equally anxious and ignorant of her situation. Thence he flew to the house of honest Munster, where, instead of the information he hoped, he found nothing but tears.

"She is in the hands of the old archbishop," said the fosterfather of Ida ; "out of which no human force can rescue her. Subinko, having lost all his power in Bohemia, exercises with the more rigour what he has left in Hungary. He lives at the court of Sigismond ; Barbe is his friend ; and no one dares oppose him."

This was enough for Herman. His course was instantly resolved on. He swore to move heaven and earth for the delivery of his mistress from the persecution to which she was exposed ; and reproached himself for having so long remained easy respecting her fate. He had supposed a convent the safest possible asylum

lum for an innocent young woman : a bishop, he imagined, could have no other views, no other designs, in imprisoning an heretic, than instructing her, and making her renounce her errors : but he soon changed his opinion when he had heard Munster. From that moment every hour appeared an age till Ida was delivered. His distance from her seemed greater every step he took. Happily Munster accompanied him, whose cool judgment prevented or repaired the numerous follies to which our young knight, from his eager-precipitancy, was exposed.

The court of Hungary, detestable as it must have appeared to him by the presence of an ungrateful king, and a wicked queen, of whom he could not think without recollecting the adventures of the castle of Cyly, was the place to which he would fain, on magic wings, have been instantaneously transported. There he expected to hear news of Ida ; there awaited him a new pleasure, which he had frequently desired since the happy issue of his misfortunes : Duke Albert of Austria was expected at Presburg. To see him, to be protected, counselled by him, and at length to save Ida, formed a prospect highly pleasing to Herman, who sincerely respected the prince, and was fully convinced, that Albert would warmly support whatever could

could contribute to the accomplishment of his desires.

On his appearance at the court of Hungary, Herman found that he was treated with far more respect as count of Unna, than he had been as the simple knight of fidelity.

Queen Barbe received him graciously, and had the effrontery, though she knew he was acquainted with her infamous conduct, to look him boldly in the face. She was accustomed to suppose that others had no better memory than herself; and that the witnesses of her former irregularities had forgotten them since her advancement.

It was painful to Herman to pay her the homage due to a queen of Hungary, recollecting that she to whom that honour rightly pertained was still living. He retired with horror from the gaolers of Mary, though he knew not a tenth part of the cruelties she had inflicted on that unhappy victim of her ambition.

King Sigismund paid to the young count of Unna the most flattering attention. No doubt he had entirely forgotten the kiss imprinted on the lips of Barbe, with which Herman had once falsely been charged; or he must since have been accustomed to know, that others beside himself were admitted to that familiarity: report at least spoke

spoke pretty loudly, that Barbe was not very scrupulous on the head of gallantry, and it was almost impossible that her intrigues should remain totally concealed from her husband.

Herman was disappointed in his expectation of finding duke Albert at Presburg. He had gone, it was said, to Klaufenburg, to see the princess Elizrbeth, whence they were both set off to visit the princess Gara at the convent of St. Nicholas : a journey that appeared not to have given satisfaction at court, owing to the princess of Ratibor, who, in disgrace with Sophia, and obliged to retire to the same convent with her daughter, had in her way passed through Presburg, and, according to custom, propagated calumnies and excited discontent.

Oh ! had Herman known that Gara, the friend of the young Elizabeth, was the friend also of Ida, and lived but a few miles from her ; and that the latter was in the most imminent danger, while others were enjoying happiness for which they were indebted to her, he would instantly have flown to her succour, and implored the assistance of all her friends to emancipate her from her frightful danger.

CHAPTER XXXI.

QUEEN Mary, as the reader has seen, had been liberated from her long and severe captivity. Already she tasted the delicious satisfaction of being once more in the company of the princess Gara, and expected, with impatience, the happy moment, when she should fold her child in her arms. A messenger had been secretly dispatched to Elizabeth with the news. Duke Albert, who was then at Klausenburg, immediately set off with her, to convince himself with his own eyes of the most incredible deliverance of Mary. At the period of the history at which we are arrived, the interview between the mother and daughter had taken place. After the first transports of joy were over, their spirits being a little calmed, they gave themselves up to the sweet pleasure of reflecting on their happiness. Yet it would be wrong to suppose, that, in these delightful moments, she who had occasioned them was forgotten: had every one else been capable of such forgetfulness, it was impossible that the heart of the queen should harbour such ingratitude. She spoke to her daughter,
with

with enthusiasm, of the princess of Wirtemberg, and prayed duke Albert to devise some means of rescuing her, whom she called her only deliverer, her tutelary angel. Albert and Eliza blushed. Why the former did so, we knew not: the blush of the latter no doubt arose from a secret shame at having received the greatest benefit from a person, whom, through the insinuations of a perfidious friend, she had once so unjustly hated.

The princess Gara remarked the emotion of Elizabeth, and observed, that neither force nor cunning could rescue Ida, and that the consent of the archbishop alone could restore her to liberty. To obtain this, therefore, every probable step was immediately taken: though the particular reasons of Subinko for detaining her in prison were not yet known to them, the delicate Ida having never explained herself fully on that head even to Mary.

In the mean time Herman could not avoid experiencing a secret inquietude respecting the fate of his mistress: but how much greater would have been his anxiety, had he known the sad situation in which she was, and the inefficacy of the means employed to deliver her. In a fortnight she was to pronounce her vows. The archbishop answered duke Albert's letter in favour of the princess of Wirtemberg
in

in an equivocal manner : this answer demanded a reply ; and thus Subinko imagined he should spin out the affair, till she had irrevocably dedicated herself to God ; and an insurmountable barrier, which would effectually destroy the happiness of Herman, was placed between her and the world.

One evening as Herman sat alone absorbed in thought, and revolving in his mind a variety of schemes for the discovery of Ida, the door opened, and a person entered, whom he supposed to be at the court of Sigismund, but whom he had sought with eagerness without being able to find him.

“ Conrad, dear Conrad ! ” cried Herman, running to him with open arms, “ you arrive at one of the most perplexing moments of my life, to console, perhaps to assist me.”

“ Would it were in my power ! ” answered Conrad, taking off his hat and sword, and throwing himself into a chair : “ but I am come with the utmost speed to inform you, that there are no farther hopes.”

Herman stood before his friend, his arms hanging lifeless by his side, and his eyes wildly staring, as if he had just heard pronounced the sentence of his death ; when he suddenly recollected, that the sad news

Conrad

Conrad had to impart to him might not relate to Ida.

"What have you to tell me," said he at last, "in which I am concerned? I am indifferent to every thing but Ida, and of her you surely know nothing."

"Yet it is of her, and her only, I have to speak. I am just arrived from the convent of St. Anne, to tell you that all is over, that she is lost to you, if but how is it possible to accomplish in a few days, what has employed me whole weeks in vain?"

"You know then her abode: you bring me news of her: yet you pretend she is ravished from me for ever! impossible! impossible! happiness and misery at once!—I tell you it cannot be, since we knew where she is, she must be saved: she must, or we must both perish."

Herman, as he uttered these words, caught up his sword, and cried to his people to come and arm him.

"Be persuaded once for all," resumed Conrad, forcing him to sit down on his chair, "that I have done every thing which it is possible for man to do."

"But did you not say, that in a few days there would be no remedy? We have not then a moment to lose. Let us fly, let us fly instantly, to her succour."

"But

“ But what could you do?—Do you
“ even know in what her danger consists?
“ —Do you know any thing more than
“ the name of the convent in which she
“ dwells? Let me assure you that any
“ step you could take to night would be
“ useless. It is necessary, that you should
“ first wait the result of a new attempt I
“ have made; and you have nothing to
“ do for the present, but seriously attend
“ to the account I am going to give you of
“ your mistress.”

Herman walked up and down the room, almost beside himself. The representations of Conrad at length prevailed on him to abstain from setting off at a venture, without knowing what measures were necessary to his success, if indeed any hopes of success were left.

“ Tell me then;” cried he with eagerness: “ you see I am calm; calm enough to hear any thing you have to say.”

CHAPTER XXXII.

“ YOU remember,” said Conrad, how
“ I parted from you on the frontiers of
“ Germany. You refused to fly with me;
“ my presence was of no service to you;
“ and I knew that elsewhere it might be
“ useful.

“ My thoughts were occupied with your
“ Ida,—‘ Herman,’ said I to myself, ‘ will
“ arrive at his uncle’s, his innocence will
“ be acknowledged, and nothing will be
“ wanting to his happiness but the possession
“ of her he loves. How sad an employment,
“ should he be obliged to seek
“ her, and perhaps long seek her in vain?
“ Now, Conrad, an opportunity offers of
“ repaying his kindness, undertake this
“ task for him. What triumph, if thou
“ canst restore to thy friend his intended
“ bride, before he considers it as an event
“ barely possible.’

“ At first the only light I had to guide
“ my steps was, that Ida was in a convent
“ in Hungary. I tarried no longer at
“ Prague than was necessary to get farther
“ information. There I learnt, that
“ the archbishop had carried off the princess
“ of Wirtemberg under pretence of
“ heresy,

“ herefy, and perhaps on account of a
“ pair of bright eyes which had captivated
“ him; for different persons gave differ-
“ ent characters of Subinko, and God
“ knows which were in the right.

“ At the demand of Sophia, Wincef-
“ laus had banished Subinko from Bohe-
“ mia, and the prelate was gone to reside
“ in Hungary at the court of Sigismond.
“ This was enough to induce me with all
“ speed to repair thither.

“ I found no difficulty in being admit-
“ ted into the king’s service: an honour
“ which I desired at bottom only as a
“ means of access to the archbishop, which
“ I obtained with equal ease. I formed
“ an acquaintance with some of his do-
“ mestic; I drank with them, and amus-
“ ed them with stories of my campaigns.
“ You know how much the attendants of
“ a bishop, who have seen no service, and
“ been exposed to no dangers themselves,
“ love to hear the hair-breadth escapes of
“ others.

“ My scheme succeeded to a marvel.
“ The men became communicative, and,
“ dissatisfied with their master, told me
“ more than I wished to know. My only
“ aim was to discover the retreat of the
“ princefs of Wirtemberg, which by in-
“ direct questions I effected. I learnt from
“ them that the archbishop had been to

“ see her at the convent of St. Nicholas,
“ which he quitted in very ill humour,
“ and swore, before his valet de chambre,
“ that he would never see her again till
“ she had taken the veil. Ida since that
“ had been removed to St. Anne’s, and the
“ year of her noviciate was nearly ex-
“ pired.

“ I had formed a more particular inti-
“ macy with one of the archbishop’s cava-
“ liers. He was a man from whom any
“ thing might be obtained by means of
“ money and promises. To Rudger, the
“ attraction of a handful of gold was irre-
“ sistible: he promised to conduct me to
“ St. Anne’s, and to do whatever I desired
“ him.

“ When we reached the convent, I told
“ him my purpose of carrying off Ida. I
“ was at first afraid, that a rape of a
“ nun would startle him: but I soon found
“ that he was used to such expeditions.
“ In his youth he had assisted at more ad-
“ ventures than one of that kind: and he
“ boasted of having formerly himself had
“ an intrigue with a lay-sister in this self-
“ same convent, which, though it did not
“ indeed terminate in carrying off the fair,
“ had exposed him to more risk, dur-
“ ing the year it continued, than if he had
“ ventured at once on so bold a measure.

“ He

“ He informed me, that near the wall
“ of the burying ground was an old tree,
“ which used to cover some breaches in
“ it, by which, with proper caution, easy
“ access might be had to the convent.
“ There he said he would reconnoitre, and
“ endeavour to get some information re-
“ specting the interior of the convent;
“ for amongst those who have renounced
“ the world, there are always individuals
“ with whom connexions may be formed:
“ the caterers, door-keepers, and the like,
“ are not incorruptible, and a few trifling
“ presents will not fail of seducing them.

“ Rudger soon returned, and brought
“ me good news. Happily for the poor
“ nuns, the breaches in the wall remained
“ as they were ten years before. He had
“ learned that Ida was commonly in the
“ infirmary, the windows of which looked
“ into the burying-ground, and that she
“ sometimes took a nocturnal walk among
“ the tombs, which was favourable to our
“ enterprize.

“ One doubt remained, which was, that
“ I was unacquainted with the person of
“ her whom I was desirous of carrying off;
“ a difficulty which my trusty companion
“ soon removed, by assuring me, that he
“ knew the princess. ‘ I was one of the
“ attendants,’ said he, ‘ who accompanied
“ her to St. Anne’s. Her slender and ma-
“ jestic

“ jestic shape will distinguish her at once;
“ and the moment we have removed her
“ veil, her angelic countenance will dis-
“ pel every doubt.”

At these words Herman sighed. Who, indeed, could have once beheld the charms of Ida, and heard them mentioned without emotion?

Conrad continued: “ To convince me
“ of the truth of what he had asserted,
“ Rudger introduced me that very even-
“ ing into the cemetery. We easily scaled
“ the wall. His plan was good, but I
“ pretended to doubt it, the more to ex-
“ cite him to surmount all difficulties. I
“ succeeded in this, and he himself en-
“ couraged me, and endeavoured to per-
“ suade me of the facility of the enter-
“ prise. He was extremely pressing for
“ me to use dispatch, as the archbishop
“ was soon to make his visitation, and it
“ would probably not be long before Ida
“ took the veil. He gave me hopes, that
“ it would perhaps be possible to carry off
“ the princess on the day of an approach-
“ ing festival, when the nuns enjoyed more
“ liberty than usual: but I was still of opi-
“ nion, that it was absolutely necessary to
“ acquaint Ida with our designs, in order
“ to insure their execution.

“ ‘ Would it take much time,’ said I
“ to him, ‘ to cut through a few bars of
“ the

“ the window? We could then gain admittance to her, acquaint her with our scheme, and carry off at once, or at least make the necessary arrangement.”

“ To this Rudger started some objections. We returned again to the cemetery, to make further observations, when we saw something white pass by us, that vanished like lightning through a door which we had not observed to be open, and which immediately shut with some noise.

“ ‘ What is that?’ said I to my companion with surprise. ‘ Let me die,’ said he, ‘ if it was not she herself. I am sure of it from her shape, and the lightness of her step. The nuns of this convent have long ago lost all their alertness.’

“ ‘ How unlucky,’ exclaimed I, ‘ that we have missed so fair an opportunity! we shall never be blessed with such another.’

“ ‘ Come, come,’ said he, ‘ do not despair. We may be more successful to-morrow.’

“ We left the burying place, with design to return thither the next night; which we did; but to our extreme regret we found that the wall behind the tree had been considerably heightened. It was plain that our scheme was suspected,

“ pested, and that measures were taken to
“ counteract it. Some breaches, however,
“ still remained: possibly they had not
“ been observed, or they might have been
“ left by design.

“ We entered boldly, resolved to risk
“ every thing to accomplish our purpose.
“ We ascended to the window of the in-
“ firmary; though we missed our guide,
“ the lamp which usually burnt there.
“ Accident, we thought, might have ex-
“ tinguished it, and at any rate darkness
“ was favourable to our design.

“ Having cut through the bars, we en-
“ tered the chamber. Conceive our des-
“ pair, when we found it empty. There
“ was neither nurse nor patient: all had
“ disappeared; and the door that com-
“ municated with the convent was firmly
“ secured. We returned sorrowfully as
“ we came, convinced that we were disco-
“ vered.

“ On the festival of St. Nicholas, when,
“ as Rudger assured me, the nuns of the
“ convent enjoyed more liberty, and there
“ was some probability of our being able
“ to meet with the princess, we made an-
“ other attempt.

“ We concealed ourselves and were on
“ the watch all day. Many of the nuns
“ came in our way, but none that were for
“ our purpose. At length, towards even-
“ ing,

“ ing, we perceived one whose figure per-
“ suaded us it was Ida. We rushed on-
“ her, and conducted her away, without
“ her uttering a single cry. She was half
“ up the ladder, when, luckily, her veil
“ fell off, and discovered to us a face so
“ destitute of the bewitching charms of
“ Ida’s, as described to me by Rudger,
“ that we had nearly betrayed ourselves by
“ a cry of astonishment.

“ We quitted our prize, cursed our fate,
“ and hastened away ; not indeed renounc-
“ ing our project, but disposed to under-
“ take something still more daring and rash.
“ Fortune at this period brought to my aid
“ a man wonderfully calculated to assist
“ me in my undertaking. It was my old
“ and faithful Walter, who, being dis-
“ engaged from his oaths, could openly
“ advise and serve me. He knew Ida, and
“ wished to save her, though his invention
“ was not very fertile in stratagems : mine,
“ indeed, he frequently termed rash, yet
“ he was always ready to second me in
“ their execution.

“ To recount all the means we employ-
“ ed would be tedious ; but instead of
“ succeeding I fear they have contributed
“ to render the fate of the princess more
“ severe, and her deliverance next to im-
“ possible.”

Conrad had scarcely finished these words, when Herman started from his seat and exclaimed: "Madman, that thou art, thou pretendest to serve me, and by thy impatience hast ruined me. Tell me, tell me this instant where is Ida? I will yet, I will yet save her."

Langen had great difficulty to calm his friend, and induce him to hear his recital to the end. "In short," resumed he, "let me tell you then, that I formed the design of setting fire to the convent; and of availing myself of the confusion to carry off Ida."

"Rudger and Walter, my companions, had more judgment than I; and the scheme was so modified and changed, that finally we determined to kindle a little straw and other combustibles, easy to be extinguished, in one of the courts of the convent, at which we could arrive through the cemetery."

"This we carried into execution. The flames ascended into the air in a terrible manner. With a hollow voice Rudger gave the alarm of fire. All the nuns were roused; all the cells opened. Once more, during the tumult, we laid hold of a nun, whom, in the dark, we took for the princess. Walter in the meantime extinguished the fire and followed us. We took off the veil of the nun, who

“ who had fainted, and found ourselves a
“ second time mistaken. We left her in
“ the cemetery, and fled.

“ The consequences of so bold an at-
“ tempt were certainly to be dreaded. To
“ terrify the nuns by setting fire to their
“ convent, to carry off one of them, and
“ then contemptuously to desert her, were
“ too many insults for one time. The whole
“ neighbourhood resounded with outcries
“ against the sacrilegious robbers, and we
“ should certainly have been torn to pieces
“ had we been suspected. Thus all fur-
“ ther attempts became impracticable.
“ The convent of St. Anne was guarded
“ by armed men, and the report was
“ spread, that the nuns well knew who
“ was the occasion of these attempts, and
“ that they would soon get rid of her, by
“ sending her to some distant and unknown
“ convent, where it would be impossible to
“ find her.

“ I cannot better describe the despair
“ into which this news threw me, than by
“ comparing it to that which I read at this
“ moment in your eyes.”

In fact Herman was no longer master of himself; yet could he not utter a single word; and Conrad finished his narrative without interruption.

“ Fortunately,” continued he, “ Rud-
“ ger discovered that duke Albert of
“ Austria

“ Austria was at the neighbouring con-
“ vent of St. Nicholas, to which he had
“ accompanied the princess Elizabeth.
“ Knowing, from your story, the duke’s
“ friendship both for you and Ida, I haf-
“ tened to him, gave an account of every
“ thing, and asked his advice and affis-
“ tance.

“ He had already taken many steps in
“ Ida’s favour. What I related to him
“ heightened the danger in his eyes; yet
“ he immediately took measures both to
“ ascertain her situation, and find means
“ of delivering her. Having learnt that
“ she was still at St. Anne’s, the duke dis-
“ patched me with a pressing letter to the
“ archbishop; a letter, which he con-
“ ceives must have a good effect; un-
“ less the prelate be determined to risk
“ every thing. To execute the commis-
“ sion I am come hither. Could a more
“ trusty or expeditious courier have been
“ chosen?”

“ And what effect has this letter pro-
“ duced?” said Herman in a tone of despair.

“ The answer I received was very singu-
“ lar,” replied Conrad: “ the day which
“ is fast approaching will inform us what
“ we are to think of it. I found every
“ thing in confusion in the archbishop’s
“ palace; and nothing less than the name
“ of the duke of Austria would have gained
“ my packet admittance. I was assured,

“ that

“ that his holiness was extremely ill, and
“ incapable of reading a letter, much more
“ of answering one.

“ I insisted, however, on not quitting
“ the palace without an answer for the
“ duke. At length the grand almoner
“ made his appearance, and informed me,
“ that the archbishop was really very ill,
“ but, however things went, that I should
“ have an answer early in the morning. I
“ then came to you. The servant, who let
“ me out, confidently assured me, that the
“ archbishop was at the point of death, and
“ could not possibly live to see the day;
“ an event, which, I am persuaded, will
“ be of no advantage to our affair.”

“ Why not? Ida’s persecutor dead, who
“ will oppose her liberation?”

“ Do you know the successor of Subin-
“ ko? New comers generally de-
“ fend the rights of the church more ob-
“ stinately than those who have been long
“ in place.”

“ We shall at least have no private in-
“ terest to combat relative to Ida. And
“ if, as has been generally presumed, the
“ covetous Albikus succeed, from his
“ venal disposition I have every thing to
“ hope. . . . O Conrad, your news, you
“ thought, would be death to me: on the
“ contrary it restores me to life and hap-
“ piness!”

Thus

Thus did the two friends spend the night without sleep, revolving in their minds the past, and forming projects for the future. It is true they reckoned upon an event which generous minds seldom take into their calculations; but, as the death of the archbishop would be a happy circumstance for a number of persons groaning under oppression, the friends of Ida were surely excusable, and fortune accordingly effected the accomplishment of their wish.

In the morning they heard, that Subinko had finished his detestable career, and that Albikus would be his successor. The new archbishop resided at Prague, and Herman's resolution was soon taken.

"Repair with all speed," said he to Conrad, "to the place where my Ida is imprisoned; and watch, that she do not escape me, that she be not secretly conveyed to some place where it will require ages for me to find her. I shall myself fly to Prague, to the new archbishop of whom money will purchase every thing, and shall offer him for her enlargement all I possess, nay all ~~of~~ which I may hope the possession. The count of Wirtemberg, who ere this is at the court of king Wenceslaus, will second my wishes. If I succeed, I will soon be with you. Her father, duke Albert, and you, who
" are

“are all dear to her as well as to me; shall
“then join me, to lead her in triumph
“from her horrible dungeon.”

The spirits of Herman were elevated to the highest pitch. His resolution had been formed with the quickness of lightning; and with equal rapidity was put in execution.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE anxiety of Herman and Conrad was but too well founded. The situation of the princess of Wirtemberg since we left her had every day grown worse.

The attempts made to carry her off, came not, as has been seen, from the archbishop, but from Conrad of Langen, who, to serve his friend, had employed all possible means, prudent or imprudent.

His schemes, however, would have infallibly succeeded, had he acted with less precipitancy, or had they not been opposed by her who might have favoured them. But Ida believed Subinko to be the author of this enterprise; and, besides, had she even been informed of the benevolent hand
that

that wished to free her from her dungeon, her principles would probably have revolted at such a mode of deliverance. To escape from a convent, to elope from it with a stranger, however considered, must shock the delicacy of a modest young woman, and might irretrievably stain her reputation.

Ida neither expected nor hoped for deliverance, but through the solicitations of her friends. She knew not how cold and indifferent was common friendship, when sacrifices are to be made. Elizabeth and the princess Gara, her new acquaintance, happy in the possession of Mary, employed all their cares in re-establishing her health. When they thought of Ida, they quieted their apprehensions for her fate, by the hope that it would soon change, and thus spared themselves the trouble of any exertion to meliorate it.

The queen, it is true, had the name of her deliverer always in her mouth; but they endeavoured to tranquillise her, by hopes of which she could not know the slight foundation.

Duke Albert, the ardent admirer of Ida, was obliged to conceal his anxiety, lest he should rekindle in the heart of his future bride those embers of jealousy which were yet scarcely extinguished. There was no one but Conrad, therefore, the imprudent
Conrad,

Conrad, who engaged with ardor in our heroine's cause, though, alas! with little success.

The last stratagem to which he had recourse, occasioned the utmost tumult in the convent. The whole community united against its innocent cause. All the nuns exclaimed, "What! daily new alarms! cells forced! nuns ravished! the house set on fire! must we all then become the victims of one? Let her depart from these holy walls; let her be sent to some remote place, where no one can discover her, there to undergo rigid penances, capable of expiating the evils we have suffered on her account." Such was the unanimous desire of these pious maidens.

The abbess, assured that Ida was far from consenting to the rash wishes of those who had attempted to violate the sacred inclosure of the convent, and believing that she had at length inspired her with a taste for a life which she at first abhorred, would willingly have protected her. But even the attachment she manifested in her favour, rendered her doubly odious to the sisters, to whom it was an object of envy. They insisted, therefore, on the novice's removal to another house, that they might avoid the misfortunes of which her presence might still be the occasion.

The

The princess was obliged to keep herself closely confined in her cell, and was forbidden to appear in the choir. By degrees suspicions were insinuated into the mind of the abbess. "Is it so very certain," said they, "that she is innocent of what has been done on her account. May not her repugnance to be carried away be a feint? And may she not be in concert with these bold men, who, if she remain here, will, sooner or later, be the ruin of our house?"

Accusations like these had not the least shadow of probability, yet were they listened to, and at length produced, what is called in convents, a grand interrogatory.

Ida was summoned; a thousand questions were put to her; which she answered in a manner to produce conviction of her innocence, and to humble her enemies; one only excepted, to which it was impossible for her to make the reply which her situation seemed to require, and her sincerity was her ruin.

How, indeed, could the princess answer in the affirmative, when asked if she thought herself really called, if she were ready to take the veil without reluctance, and if she preferred the convent of St. Anne to all the pleasures of the world? Was there even among her judges a single individual, who, from the bottom of her heart,

heart, could have said yes to such a question? Ida avowed, therefore, with frankness, that the means only employed to deliver her, and the place to which she was probably to have been conducted, were displeasing to her; and that, but for these, she would return with joy to the world, and should be happy to see her friends. She, besides, solemnly declared, that, if she made her vows, necessity alone would compel her to it, as she felt not the smallest inclination for a religious life.

At these words the whole community was transported with pious rage, and the term hypocrite issued at once from every mouth. She was reproached with having, not long since, held a different language, or of having, by her silence, at least given reason to suppose, that she would willingly remain at St. Anne's. Ida shrugged up her shoulders, and held her peace. No doubt she had appeared satisfied with her dungeon from attachment to Mary, that she might succour and save that unfortunate queen. How could she confess this? and what indeed would it have availed her, to enter into an explanation of her conduct?

"You say nothing," said the abbess. . .
"There is some mystery in this which we cannot penetrate."

"And what does she mean," added one of the sisters, "by the place to which she
" was

“ was afraid of being conducted, had the
“ men succeeded in carrying her off? . . .
“ She knew the place, then; is not this a
“ proof, that she has some secret intelli-
“ gence with persons out of the con-
“ vent.”

The princess being rigorously enjoined to explain herself fully on this head, at last found herself obliged to name the archbishop, and own the designs he had manifested respecting her.

This confession at once determined the sentence to be pronounced on her. “ Abominable slanderer,” cried the abbess, “ thou art unworthy to live. ’Tis an absolute impossibility, that a man so holy, a prelate so aged, so rigidly devout, could be tempted by the worldly charms of such a sinner.” As she said this, she turned, with an air of disdain, from the princess, and ordered her to be immediately confined in the place appropriated for such criminals.

Accordingly Ida was conveyed to one of those subterranean dungeons, vestiges of which are yet to be seen in the majority of convents; though, in those days, no doubt, they were far more terrible than any that subsists at present. Her conductors were the two nuns who had like to have been carried off in her stead, and who had shewn themselves most eager for her condemnation,

tion, desirous of avenging on her the disgrace of being rejected with contempt, when almost delivered from the precincts of their convent.

Ida's imprisonment was interrupted only by a new interrogatory. The archbishop, possibly feeling a presage of approaching death, came that day to visit St. Anne's, and knowing nothing of what had passed, he demanded a private conversation with the young novice. This the abbess, who appeared to have great influence over his mind, thought proper to refuse; and ordered Ida to be brought before him in presence of the whole community.

The princess was obliged to repeat what she had already declared: which she did with courage and discretion, observing, that what related to the attempt to carry her off was purely conjectural.

The eyes of Subinko sparkled with rage and indignation. He proved, at least with respect to the latter point, the falsehood of the accusation against him, and Ida was reconducted to her prison.

The nuns were now ordered to withdraw, and leave the archbishop alone with the abbess. What passed on this occasion between these pious personages has not transpired: but it is certain that the prelate soon quitted the convent, and apparently in the greatest agitation. Perhaps the
rights

rights of the abbess authorised her to tell him, without disguise, certain severe truths, the shock of which his feeble frame was inadequate to sustain, and which had the most serious consequences on the old gentleman's health.

He had quitted Presburg in secret, and as secretly did he return thither. The report of his illness was soon spread ; and it was not long before the news of his death was made public ; which gave the friends of Ida hopes of effecting her deliverance.

In the mean time the situation of the princess of Wirtemberg daily grew worse. The abbess appeared to hate her mortally. A few words dropped occasionally from her jailers, that inspired her with the utmost terror. From them she had reason to suspect, that there was an intention of shutting her up in a cavern that had formerly been dug beneath the very foundations of the convent. Of this fearful abode Ida had frequently heard ; for twenty years it had never been used ; and she had new reason to fear that she would be the first unhappy wretch destined to finish her days in it.

She was on the brink of giving way to despair. There were moments in which her senses were entirely lost. . . . " Alas !" said she in her lucid intervals, " I am abandoned

“ abandoned, then, by all the world ! . . .
“ Herman ! Albert ! Mary ! my father !
“ no one, no one comes to my assistance.”

She was no longer interrogated. Every instant she trembled, lest the abbess should come to remove her from her dungeon to this terrible cavern. One day, when cruelly tormented by this apprehension, she heard the door open : the abbess appeared ; Ida fainted at the sight of her.

“ I must see her myself,” cried the holy matron “ Where is she ? . . . Good God, what an accident ! . . . Senseless on the ground ! . . . Perhaps dead ! . . . God forbid ! O St. Anne, have pity on us !—Take her up quickly, and convey her to one of the chambers above.”

“ Holy mother,” said one of the sisters, who accompanied her, “ let her remain in peace where she is. If dead, it may be well : the dead, you know, tell no tales.”

“ True. But what a terrible spectacle ! her emaciated body will bear testimony against us. . . . Let us see, however. . . . Ah, she breathes ! she is yet alive. Take her instantly away, and give her every possible assistance.”

After remaining a whole hour insensible, Ida came to herself. She was astonished to perceive a clean and well-lighted chamber.

Fancying

Fantying herself in a dream, she endeavoured to rise from the bed of down, on which she had been placed. It was the bed of the abbess herself.

"Be still, be still, my dear daughter," said the abbess, who sat at the bedside, anxiously feeling her pulse.

"Where am I?" said the princess.

"In the midst of your friends. The term of your trial is finished. Yes, we wished not to punish, but to try you. You know how much you were beloved by us."

Ida turned impatiently to the other side of the bed.

"She wants rest," said the abbess to one of the nuns. "I will leave her to make the necessary preparations. Let her want for nothing, and call me when she awakes."

The princess had indeed need of rest, of tranquillity, though not of sleep. What passed around her, too much engaged her attention for her to think of sleeping. Her weakness would not yet permit her to talk: she pressed the hand of the nun who sat by her, and fixed her languid eyes on the face of her compassionate nurse, which was wet with tears. She was one of Ida's friends, one of those whom her generous care had snatched from the jaws of death.

"What

"What means this change?" said the princess, after some time.

The nun made a sign for her to be silent, and crept softly to the door, to see if any one were listening.

"To-morrow," said she, returning to the side of the bed, "we expect our new archbishop, who is coming with the count of Wirtemberg, duke Albert, and the count of Unna, to deliver from the convent a young lady who is unfortunate but not guilty."

Ida had never heard of the archbishop's death, consequently could not comprehend his having a successor: her father, she supposed to be at a great distance; and of the count of Unna she knew nothing. She was far from suspecting, that the person in question was her beloved Herman. Taking, therefore, what was said for a dream, she closed her eyes the longer to enjoy it.

Soon, however, she opened them again and put a fresh question to her companion. The nun made no answer, but pointed to the door. A moment after the abbess appeared.

"Have you slept, my child," said she.

"She has but this moment awaked," answered the nun.

“ Sleep, sleep, my dear,” continued the abbess. “ Those pale cheeks must regain their bloom against to-morrow : those languid eyes must sparkle with their usual vivacity. You do not know whom you will see a father a friend a a , what shall I say ?”

The pious lips of the abbess refused to utter the word lover, which was on the tip of her tongue. Ida had heard enough, however, to be transported with joy.

“ It is then, it is really true ?” cried she, clasping her hands together.

“ What means this transport of joy ?”
“ Have you already been informed of the news ?”

“ No, no : but I have been dreaming of such an event.

The abbess answered, that heaven frequently held a communication with the virtuous during their sleep. “ I too dreamt,” added she, “ that you must be made to undergo trials, and very severe ones, in order to give you a more exquisite sensation of happiness.”

Out of respect to this dream, and the long exhortations that were made to her to be reconciled, to keep the secrets of the convent, and to think only of her future felicity, the princess promised not to disclose the ills she had endured, to forego
all

all thoughts of revenge, and to endeavour to persuade herself, that what she had suffered was meant, as the abbess had said, as a trial, not as punishment; was the effect of friendship, not the consequence of hatred.

The happy day, the day of a union so long wished for, at length began to dawn. So much had been said to Ida of her happiness, that she became insensibly familiarized to the idea. Restoratives, liberally administered, had given her sufficient strength to rise, and be led to meet her friends. She might be compared to a beautiful rose a little withered, and just revived by the morning dew. By turns she received expressions of affection from her father, and from her lover. What appellations of endearment were interchanged! what questions put! what emotions felt! With difficulty could Herman and Ida support their ecstasy. The joy of the count of Wirtemberg was scarcely short of theirs; duke Albert turned aside to conceal a tear; and the archbishop Albikus was so pleased with the present he had received for the princess's liberty, that he offered to marry her to the count of Unna on the spot. But this the abbess obstinately opposed. "How horrid," said she, "to think of performing such a ceremony within the sacred walls of a convent!"

Next day the princess of Wirtemberg found herself in the arms of Mary, Elizabeth, and Rose-Gara: she had the pleasure also of embracing Münster, and testifying her gratitude to the generous Conrad. What excess of happiness! To paint it, who will dare take the pencil?

At length Herman espoused his beloved Ida. He presented her to his respected uncle; he introduced her to the acquaintance of the rest of his family; of Alicia; of Agnes, and of Petronilla. Ulrich of Senden became her friend. John of Unna appeared also to share his brother's happiness; and Herman succeeded in reconciling him to the old count.

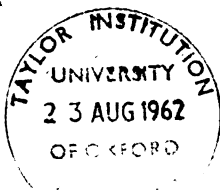
We are unable to give the reader farther particulars, the latter part of our manuscript being illegible. Two leaves only have escaped the ravages of time. In the first is a letter from Mrs. Münster to her husband, dated in the year 1419, which informs us, that the young countess of Unna had just been delivered of a son. Ida was then at the court of her friend, queen Sophia. It was the last year that Sophia wore the crown: become a widow, by the death of Winceslaus, she retired to a convent in hopes of there finding that repose she had vainly sought on a throne.

In the second leaf is an invitation from Herman, count of Unna, to Alicia of Senden,

den, and her husband Ulric, to come to Ratibon to be sponsors for his second son. From which it appears, that Bernard and Catherine were both dead, and that fortune had thus taken care to unite, after a long series of unhappiness, two virtuous beings, who had so little deserved to be separated.

We find also a few fragments, which indicate, that Herman, by the advice of his father-in-law and uncle, had determined to enter into that society, which had given his past life so many alarms. An anecdote which will appear by no means improbable; if we consider, that, at that period, whoever would put his life in surety, must be linked, either in his own person, or by means of some dependant, to that formidable chain which, while it encircled all, was invisible to every eye.

THE END.



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